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# Some institutions want weak govt: PM

## Modi said Congress supported open corruption, provided a weak government

**HOSAPETE, 28 APRIL**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday alleged that some countries and institutions want India and its government to be weak to make profits easily.

He alleged that Congress was also a beneficiary of “this corruption.”

“When the country is moving fast, some countries and some institutions don’t like it. There are many people who don’t like a strong India. They want the country and its government to be weak, so that they can make profits easily,” Modi said addressing a public meeting at this taluka headquarters town in Vijayanagara district.

Weak government helps them get their work done according to their requirements, he said.

“Congress too was a clear beneficiary of this corruption. This was the game going on but the BJP has become a challenge for them. Their worry is that there is a BJP government which no one can bend,” the Prime Minister said.

He added that those who are aware of the Lutyens Delhi know that before 2014 brokers ruled the roost in the corridors of power.

“I want to tell the Congress and its allies in clear terms that how much ever effort you make to stall the BJP, India will be a developed nation,” he said.

He told the gathering that India used to import toys worth crores of rupees but due to his initiatives, the country has become a big toy exporter.

“BJP’s ‘vocal for local’ campaign is creating a global market for our products,” the Prime Minister pointed out.

He blamed the Congress government for allegedly destroying the seeds of development sowed by the BJP in Karnataka. “The Congress does not work, and stalls all the good works BJP had done,” he added.

“We worked to develop industries in Karnataka but Congress created electricity scarcity in the state after coming to power. Without electricity, industries will collapse. The power scarcity has impacted the industries of Karnataka,” Modi alleged.

*—PTI*

Prime Minister Narendra Modi in public meeting for the Lok Sabha elections, in Ballari **PHOTO: PTI**

### Modi slams Opposition on Ram Mandir

**SIRSI, 28 APRIL**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said that those who turned down the invitation for the consecration of the Ram Temple in Ayodhya will be rejected by the people in the ongoing Lok Sabha elections. He was apparently referring to Congress for not attending the event. Modi said a decision on building the Ram temple should have been taken the very next day of the country’s independence. Targeting Congress on the issue, he alleged that the “same forces” tried till the last minute to ensure that the Ram temple in Ayodhya was not built and had approached the court on last day as well. *—PTI*

## One PM each year under INDIA bloc, predicts Modi

**DAVANGERE, 28 APRIL**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday claimed that INDIA bloc has come up with a “formula” whereby the parties in Opposition alliance will get the Prime Minister’s post for one year each if they come to power. “With such a system, the good of the country cannot be expected,” he said at an election rally here, as he urged the people not to waste their vote.

Questioning the INDIA bloc on which person or leader among them could the people hand over the country’s responsibilities to, he asked, “Is there any name? Will you accept without any name, keeping you in the darkness? Will the country accept it?”

Wondering what would happen to the country and the people if this becomes the “situation”, Modi said: “Do you see the good of the country (happening) with such things? Do you see good in it for you and your children? Will you waste your vote for such a thing? Your vote is precious, please don’t waste it even by mistake.”

Former chief minister Haveri Basavaraj Bommai and Davangere BJP candidate Gayatri Siddeshwara were among others party leaders present at the rally.

“Due to its factionalism, nepotism, bad policies, Congress is playing with the future of youth, farmers and common citizens. Look at Karnataka Congress’s situation -- 2.5 years he will be there (in Chief Minister post), next 2.5 years you come,” he said.

Karnataka has become the victim of the Congress’s governance model under which they made a great sin of indulging in corruption and scams of crores of rupees, he said. Accusing Congress of creating a number of fake beneficiaries of government schemes claiming that this was their model of corruption, he said, “They have mastery in corruption. Our government has removed about 10 crore such fake beneficiary names and have put a lock on their (Congress) corruption.” *—PTI*

PHOTO: PTI

## Gunfight in Manipur leaves 1 dead, 3 injured

**IMPHAL, 28 APRIL**

One person was killed and three others injured in a gunfight between village volunteers of two warring communities in ethnic strife-torn Manipur’s Kangpokpi district on Sunday. Dozens of gunmen had attacked Koutruk in Imphal West district on Sunday morning from elevated hilltops of neighbouring Kangpokpi district prompting village volunteers deployed in the fringe village to retaliate. Exchange of fire gradually spread to adjacent villages of Kadangband and Senjam Chirang. *—PTI*

## 6 dead, over 20 injured in vehicle collision in Unnao

**UNNAO, 28 APRIL**

Six people were killed and over 20 others were injured here on Sunday afternoon when a speeding truck collided head-on with a bus, ripping through one of its side. The bus driver fled the spot after the accident, while the truck driver has been arrested. The accident took place near Jamaldipur village on the Hardoi-Unnao road in the Safipur police station area. Doctors at the community health centre in Safipur referred the injured persons to the hospital in Unnao and in Kanpur. *—PTI*

## Musk meets Chinese Premier Li Qiang

**BEIJING, 28 APRIL**

On a surprise visit to Beijing amid speculation that he may unveil Tesla’s autonomous driving technology in the burgeoning electric vehicle (EV) market in China, billionaire Elon Musk on Sunday met Chinese Premier Li Qiang and discussed future expansion plans for his automobile. Li told Musk that China’s huge market will always be open to foreign-funded enterprises. China will work hard on expanding market access and improving services to provide foreign-funded enterprises with a better business environment and stronger support so that companies from all countries can invest in China with peace of mind, he said. ‘Autonomous driving is a key growth driver for the country’s new energy vehicle sector, arguing that the technology will hatch new business models such as robotaxis, a vision that Musk has embraced.’ *—PTI*

*>>>More on Page 6*

**SEXUAL HARASSMENT CASE**

## HDD’s grandson Prajwal booked

**HASSAN, 28 APRIL**

A case of sexual harassment and stalking was registered on Sunday against the son and grandson of former prime minister HD Deve Gowda, former minister HD Revanna and Hassan MP Prajwal Revanna respectively.

The case was registered in Holenarasipur police station in the district based on a complaint by their cook. The complainant said she is a relative of Revanna’s wife Bhavani.

She alleged that four months after she started working, Revanna used to sexually harass her, and his son Prajwal used to make video calls to her daughter and have “vulgar conversations” with her. She also alleged that there is a threat to her life as well as other members of her family.

On account of this the State government on Sunday constituted a Special Investigation Team (SIT) to probe the issue. The move came following a letter by the Chairperson of Women’s Commission Dr Nagalakshmi Chowdhary to the government.

The three-member SIT of IPS officers is led by the Additional Director General of Police (CID) Bijay Kumar Singh. The other two are Assistant Inspector General of Police Suman D Pennekar and Mysuru Superintendent of Police Seema Latkar.

Prajwal Revanna **PHOTO: X/@IPRAJWALREVANNA**

The police have information that Prajwal, who is the son of MLA and former Minister HD Revanna, has left the country, according to a statement issued by the Chief Minister’s office.

Chaudhary on Thursday wrote to Siddaramaiah and State police Chief Alok Mohan seeking a probe into the videos that are in circulation in Hassan. Through his election agent, Prajwal has lodged a complaint with the authorities that the videos are “doctored” and being circulated to tarnish his image ahead of the elections. *—PTI*

*>>>More on Page 2*

## Sangh always supports reservation: RSS

**HYDERABAD, 28 APRIL**

RSS chief Mohan Bhagwat on Sunday asserted the organisation has always been supportive of reservation, and advocated for its implementation as long as “discrimination exists,” comments that came in the wake of a viral video claiming the Sangh was against the quota system.

The remarks also assume significance as the Opposition, especially the Congress has mounted an attack against the Rashtria Swayamsevak Sangh and the ruling BJP at the Centre, accusing them of being opposed to reservation.

Speaking at the inauguration of Vidya Bharati Vignana Kendra here, Bhagwat referred to the video in circulation and said it falsely claims the RSS was opposed to reservation. The video shows him as holding a meeting, he said but claimed it never happened.

Mohan Bhagwat **PHOTO: PTI**

“RSS has been supporting reservations as per the Constitution since the time it came.”

“The Sangh says that reservation should continue till the time people, to those whom it is given, feel they need it; or, it is given due to social reasons till discrimination exists,” he added.

With the help of technology and Artificial Intelligence, what did not happen can also be shown (as to have happened), he said. Bhagwat’s pro-reservation statement also comes in the backdrop of the Congress alleging that BJP and RSS are against the quota system. In his response to Bhagwat’s remarks on the matter, Congress leader Rahul Gandhi claimed though the RSS is now saying it was not against reservation, it had earlier spoken about opposing the quota system. Addressing a campaign rally at Daman and Diu on Sunday, Rahul said the Bhagwat “makes a statement that RSS is not against reservation.” *—PTI*

## Kerala: IMD issues max temp warning

**T’PURAM, 28 APRIL**

Amid the severe heat in Kerala, the meteorological department on Sunday issued a maximum temperature warning for 12 districts over the next five days.In Kollam, Palakkad, and Thrissur districts, there’s a possibility of a heat wave in certain areas, according to the IMD and the Kerala State Disaster Management Authority. “Maximum temperatures are very likely to be around 41°C in Palakkad district, around 40°C in Kollam & Thrissur districts, around 38 degree celcius in Kottayam, Pathanamthitta, Kozhikode & Kannur districts, and around 37°C in Alappuzha, Ernakulam, Malappuram & Kasaragod districts, and around 36 degree celcius in Thiruvananthapuram district during 28 April to 2 May 2024,” the weather agencies said. These districts are expected to experience hot and humid weather conditions, excluding hilly areas, from 28 April to 2 May, due to elevated temperatures and humidity levels, they added. , there is a likelihood of heat wave conditions occurring in one or two locations within Kollam, Palakkad, and Thrissur districts specifically on 28 and 29 April, the agencies added. *—PTI*

*>>>More on Page 3*

## SUPREME COURT TO HEAR KEJRIWAL’S PLEA ON 29 APRIL

**NEW DELHI, 28 APRIL**

Supreme Court is scheduled to hear plea by Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal challenging his arrest in a money laundering case stemming from the alleged excise policy scam, on Monday.

A bench of Justices Sanjiv Khanna and Dipankar Datta is likely to hear the matter.

Kejriwal had earlier told the apex court that his “illegal arrest” in the case constitutes an unprecedented assault on the tenets of democracy based on “free and fair elections” and “federalism”.

Kejriwal claimed it is a “classical case” of how Centre has misused ED and its wide powers under Prevention of Money Laundering Act to “crush” AAP and its leaders.

Kejriwal also said there is no link whatsoever established by the ED to claim that an amount of Rs 45 crore was transferred by the South group as advanced kickback which was then utilised by AAP in Goa elections.

On 15 April, the top court issued a notice to ED and sought its response to Kejriwal’s plea. The matter pertains to alleged corruption and money laundering in the formulation and execution of the Delhi government’s excise policy for 2021-22 which was later scrapped. *—ANI*

## Sandeshkhali: Bengal Govt moves SC against HC order

**NEW DELHI, 28 APRIL**

The Supreme Court is scheduled to hear on Monday a plea by the West Bengal government challenging the Calcutta High Court order which directed a CBI probe into allegations of crimes against women and land grabbing in Sandeshkhali.

A bench of Justices BR Gavai and Sandeep Mehta is likely to hear the matter. The state government said the high court’s 10 April, 2024 order demoralised the entire state machinery, including the police force. “The high court in a very generic order directed the State to provide the required support to the CBI without any guidelines, which amounts to usurping the powers of the state police to investigate any cognisable offence in the Sandeshkhali area, even if the same is not related to the allegations levelled by the PIL petitioners,” the plea said.

Supreme Court **PHOTO: PTI**

CBI is already investigating the case of attack on Enforcement Directorate (ED) officials in Sandeshkhali and has registered three FIRs related to incidents on 5 January.

Stating that the investigation will be monitored by the court, the high court directed the CBI to file a comprehensive report on the alleged illegal conversion of agricultural land into water bodies for pisciculture after conducting a thorough inspection of revenue records and physical inspection of land alleged to have been converted. *—PTI*

**IRRESPECTIVE OF WHO THE PM IS**

## *India will be third largest economy: PC*

**KOLKATA, 28 APRIL**

Terming Prime Minister Narendra Modi a “master of exaggeration” for “turning an arithmetic inevitability into a guarantee”, senior Congress leader P Chidambaram said that India will become the third largest economy in the world no matter who becomes PM.

The former Union finance minister said India would achieve the feat given the size of its population, and there was “no magic” involved in it, but refrained from allotting a time frame within which the nation would progress to the coveted third place in the global ranking. According to World Economy Rankings 2024, India, with a GDP of USD 4.8 trillion, is preceded by the United States, China and Japan while currently standing neck and neck with Germany. Countries like France, Italy, Brazil, Canada and the UK, which also feature in the list of the world’s top 10 economies, are below India in their respective ranks.

P Chidambaram **PHOTO: PTI**

Chidambaram, who has served as the Union finance minister four times, however, asserted that the size of the GDP of a country is not the true measure of the prosperity of its people and stressed that per capita income is a more accurate indicator.

> **Congress is opposed to CAA. But cases pertaining to it are being heard in Supreme Court and we have to wait for the decision BJP has the biggest war chest, thanks to the money accumulated through electoral bonds. I cannot speak about Sitharaman’s political future. I wish her well**
>
> -P Chidambaram, Senior Congress leader

As per 2024 estimates of the International Monetary Fund, India, with its USD 2,731 per capita GDP, has a global rank of 136. Modi, during his election rallies, has highlighted economic growth as one of his biggest achievements. He has “guaranteed” the people of the country that he would make India the third largest economy, two notches higher than its current position if he gets a third consecutive term.

“Congress is opposed to CAA. But cases pertaining to it are being heard in Supreme Court and we have to wait for the decision,” he said.

On Union Finance Minister Nirmala Sitharaman’s remark that she doesn’t have the money to contest the Lok Sabha elections, Chidambaram claimed she has no “political base in any state” and would have “lost badly” had she contested from Tamil Nadu, from where both belong. “BJP has the biggest war chest, thanks to the money accumulated through electoral bonds. I cannot speak about Sitharaman’s political future. I wish her well,” he added. *—PTI*

# CM holds dharna against Centre on drought aid

## Drought relief fund released is inadequate and just a quarter of State's demand, says CM

**BENGALURU, 28 APRIL**

Karnataka Chief Minister Siddaramaiah and his deputy DK Shivakumar along with several ministers and legislators on Sunday staged a dharna here alleging injustice to the State by the union government while releasing drought relief funds.

They held the symbolic dharna in front of the Mahatma Gandhi statue on the premises of Vidhana Soudha, which houses the Legislature and Secretariat.

Addressing reporters, Siddaramaiah said Karnataka is witnessing an unprecedented drought in the state.

"We haven't seen a drought like this in 100 years. We had given a memorandum to the Centre in September last year. We were supposed to get the relief amount within a month of submitting the report but we did not get it until we approached the Supreme Court," Chief Minister said.

KANNADIGAS
MODI GOVERNMENT IS BETRAYING KANNADIGA BY SWALLOWING HEIR TAX MONEY
ಬರ ಪರಿಹಾರ
ಕೇಳಿದ್ದು 18,174 ಕೋಟಿ
ಕೊಟ್ಟಿದ್ದು 3,454 ಕೋಟಿ
ಬರ ಪರಿಹಾರ ನೀಡುವಲ್ಲಿಯೂ ಮೋದಿ ಸರ್ಕಾರದಿಂದ ಕರ್ನಾಟಕಕ್ಕೆ ಮಹಾ ಮೋಸ

The symbolic dharna was held in front of the Mahatma Gandhi statue on the premises of Vidhana Soudha, which houses the Legislature and Secretariat **PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD**

Holding placards and posters that read, "Modi government is betraying Kannadigas", "Cheating by the Modi government by not releasing adequate grants," the leaders raised slogans condemning the Centre.

They also shouted "Go back, go back, Modi go back", as the Prime Minister was on his way to holding four back-to-back public meetings in the State.

The State government has declared 226 out of the total 236 Taluks in Karnataka as drought-hit and said there was a crop loss in 48 lakh hectares of land.

According to Siddaramaiah, against the demand for Rs 18,171 crore for drought relief, the union government ordered release of only Rs 3,454 crore, that too after the state was driven to the Supreme Court to get its rights enforced.

The sanction is "woefully inadequate" and just a quarter of the state's demand, he noted.

Displaying 'Chombu', a water pot symbolising emptiness and deception, the leaders charged the Centre with "cheating" Karnataka by not releasing adequate relief to face acute drought, the kind of which was not witnessed in the past several decades.

Congress general secretary and Karnataka in-charge Randeep Singh Surjewala who too participated in the protest alleged that the Modi government is seeking "revenge" against the people of Karnataka by not releasing the adequate relief amount.

"Modi Govt gives Rs 19 out of Rs 100 demanded for drought hit farmers i.e 19 per cent - Denied Rs 14,718 CR! Out of Rs 18,172 CR for "Drought Hit Farmers", a pittance of only Rs 3,454 CR sanctioned after a case filed by Karnataka Govt," he said on X.

*—PTI*

## Bengaluru records 38 degrees on Saturday

**BENGALURU, 28 APRIL**

Bengaluru recorded 38 degrees Celsius on Saturday marking the hottest day of the year thus far. This surpasses the previous high of 37.6 degrees Celsius, setting a new record for 2024. The City had endured a stretch of six consecutive days with temperatures hovering around the 37-degree mark before reaching this new peak. The spike in temperature is attributed to various factors including El Niño, anticyclone patterns, and a ridgeline affecting certain latitudes. The absence of significant rainfall since January has also contributed to the rise in temperatures, according to experts. Despite the sweltering conditions, relief may be on the horizon as the India Meteorological Department (IMD) forecasts rainfall in the first week of May. Additionally, the IMD has warned of heatwave to severe heatwave conditions persisting over East and south Peninsular India for the next five days. As Bengaluru braces for hotter days ahead, residents are advised to take necessary precautions to stay cool and hydrated amidst the unprecedented heatwave. *—Salar News*

## 23 injured after bus loses control in Chikkamagaluru

**BENGALURU, 28 APRIL**

23 people were injured and six sustained severe wounds when a bus travelling from Shira taluk of Tumkur district travelling to the Western Ghats, veered off course, plunging 100 feet down a treacherous slope in Chikkamagaluru. The incident, took place at the junction between Dattapeeth and Manikyadhara.The tragedy struck when the driver lost control, sending the vehicle careening off the road.However there were no fatalities. All the 23 individuals were rushed to Chikmagalur District Hospital for medical treatment, along with six, who required urgent care. Authorities swiftly responded to the scene, police conducted an inspection.*—Salar News*

## Obscene photos used for blackmail in 2 cases in City

**BENGALURU, 28 APRIL**

A 23-year-old woman studying at a Bengaluru college has filed a police complaint after she was blackmailed with obscene photos circulated on social media. The accused, who is yet to be identified, reportedly created a fake Instagram account and posted edited photos of the victim. The blackmailer demanded 5,000 to remove the photos. When the victim refused to pay, accused threatened to share the photos. *—Salar News*

## 2 kids die from food poisoning in Raichur

**RAICHUR, 28 APRIL**

Two children died and three other family members are ill due to alleged food poisoning in Raichur, on Sunday. The deceased were identified as Aarti, 7, and Priyanka, 9. Meanwhile, the other family members are undergoing treatment at RIMS hospital in Raichur and are said to be in stable condition. The family, comprising six members, had been residing in Vadlur village, where they worked at a brick manufacturing plant. Dr Amar Verma, Medical Superintendent of RIMS Hospital, has indicated that food poisoning is suspected as the cause of the family's sudden illness and tragic loss. The family had consumed chapati, rice and sambar for dinner, after which their health rapidly deteriorated. Despite the medical team's efforts, they were unable to save the lives of the two young children. Raichur Rural Police have registered a case in connection with the incident. *—Salar News*

**SCANDAL AGAINST HASSAN MP**

# Let facts come out after probe: HD Kumaraswamy

**BENGALURU, 28 APRIL**

JD(S) leader HD Kumaraswamy on Sunday said he would like to wait for the facts to come out of the investigation into an alleged sex scandal involving his nephew and Hassan MP Prajwal Revanna, but asserted that there is no question of forgiving anyone who has committed a crime as per law.

The former chief minister said he has nothing to do with Revanna reportedly leaving the country, and it is the responsibility of the Special Investigation Team (SIT) to get him back if required.

Revanna is the son of former prime minister and JD(S) patriarch HD Deve Gowda's elder son HD Revanna, who is an MLA and former minister.

Some explicit video clips allegedly involving Revanna had started making the rounds in Hassan in recent days.

Kumaraswamy said, "I have noticed that the chief minister has ordered an SIT probe. Whether it is me or Deve Gowda (his father), we have always conducted ourselves respectfully towards women and have responded positively when anyone came with any sufferings. We have tried to address them."

Speaking to reporters here, he said, "The Hassan related issue that started during elections, let the facts come out through a probe. Whoever it is, who has committed the mistake as per the law of the land...there is no question of forgiving anyone who has committed the mistake. So let the facts come out from the probe, after that I will react."

To a question on Revanna going to a foreign country, Kumaraswamy said, "It is not related to me. SIT probe has been ordered, officials have been put to work. If he has gone to a foreign country, getting him back is their responsibility. What should I say, if I'm asked. They (SIT) will get him, don't worry."

Meanwhile, the police have information that Revanna has left the country, according to a statement issued by the Chief Minister's office.

The Commission's chairperson Dr Nagalakshmi Chaudhary on Thursday wrote to Siddaramaiah and State police Chief Alok Mohan, seeking a probe into the videos that are in circulation in Hassan. Prajwal has through his election agent lodged a complaint with the authorities that the videos are "doctored" and being circulated to tarnish his image ahead of elections.

*—PTI*

Congress leaders protest and burn photos of JD(S) MP Prajwal alleging his involvement in pen drive issue, on Sunday **PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD**

### Cong stages protest, demands arrest of Hassan MP Prajwal

**BENGALURU, 28 APRIL**

Members of the women's wing of Congress on Sunday staged a protest here against Hassan MP Prajwal Revanna who is embroiled in an alleged sex scandal and demanded his immediate arrest. Raising slogans against the 33-year-old, who is the grandson of JD(S) Supremo and former prime minister HD Deve Gowda, the protesters burnt his posters and sought a thorough inquiry into the case. Revanna was the NDA candidate in the Hassan Lok Sabha constituency, which went to polls on 26 April.

Many sex videos allegedly featuring him with multiple women have been doing the rounds in recent days. Demanding his immediate arrest, a Congress leader said: "He (Prajwal Revanna) should be given severe punishment and should be hanged for what he has done with these women. It has brought down the honour of the entire state of Karnataka."

Karnataka government has announced a Special Investigation Team to probe the "obscene videos case"."Obscene video clips are circulating in Hassan district, where it appears that women have been sexually assaulted," Chief Minister Siddaramaiah said.

*—PTI*

**TCS WORLD MARATHON**

More than ten thousand people took part in an Open Run held during the Bengaluru 10K Run in the City on Sunday **PHOTO: MOHAMMED ASAD**

## NEHA MURDER CASE: PONTIFF URGES CBI PROBE

**HUBBALLI, 28 APRIL**

The Balehonnur Rambhapuri pontiff has condemned the murder of MCA student Neha and urged the government to hand over the case to CBI after visiting Neha's house at Bidnala village on Sunday.

"Such despicable acts deserve the harshest punishment, including the death penalty. The anguish felt by Niranjan's family is unimaginable. The case has been handed over to the CID," he asserted.

"All political figures must unite in ensuring justice for the family. The legal process must be expedited, and the guilty brought to book. Failure to deliver justice will only fuel collective outrage," he added.

Numerous political leaders, including Chief Minister Siddaramaiah, have already visited the family to express their sympathies. Niranjan, known for his active involvement in both politics and social causes, currently serves as a member of the Hubli-Dharwad Mahanagara Corporation. The pontiff emphasised the importance of maintaining unity and dignity in addressing Neha's untimely demise, urging her soul to find peace beyond the constraints of caste divisions.

Following the discussions, the pontiff received Padapuja from Neha's parents and family members, offering solace and strength to the grieving family amidst their profound loss. *—Salar News*

## 'Shehzada' insulted rajas, PM attacks RaGa

**BELAGAVI, 28 APRIL**

Prime Minister Narendra Modi accused Congress leader Rahul Gandhi of insulting India's Rajas and Maharajas, but remaining silent on the atrocities committed by Nawabs, Nizams, Sultans and Badshahs for the sake of appeasement politics on Sunday.

He also continued his attack against Congress on the "inheritance tax" issue and targeted the party's government in Karnataka on law and order issue.

"They will x-ray your property, bank lockers, lands, vehicles, also 'Streedhan' and ornaments of women, gold, the Mangalsutra. These people will raid every house and capture your assets. After capturing they are talking about redistributing it, they want it to give it to their loved vote bank...will you allow this loot to happen?" he asked. "I want to alert Congress, Until Modi is alive, I will not allow it," Modi said.

Addressing a mega public meeting, he said, "Congress has ensured the writings of our history and our freedom struggle with an eye on appeasement and vote bank. Even today, Congress' shehzada (prince) is carrying forward that sin. You might have heard Congress' shehzada's recent statement -- he says Bharath's Rajas and Maharajas were atyachari (oppressive)." *—PTI*

### Entire nation worried about law and order in Karnataka: PM

**UTTARA KANNADA, 28 APRIL**

Attacking the Siddaramaiah government over the Hubballi murder incident, Prime Minister Narendra Modi on Sunday said that the whole nation is worried about the law and order situation in Karnataka, adding that Congress is desperate to destroy the state. Addressing an election rally in Uttara Kannada, Modi said, "The entire nation is worried about what happened to one of the daughters in the State. Parents are worried about their daughters. This is due to the sins committed by Congress. How can someone get the guts to murder someone on a college campus?, he questioned. —ANI

## 'After phase II washout PM indulging in fear mongering'

**BENGALURU, 28 APRIL**

Congress on Sunday alleged that Prime Minister Narendra Modi is indulging in "fear mongering" as he is "desperate" after facing a "washout" in the second phase of the Lok Sabha polls.

Congress general secretary Jairam Ramesh posed questions for the prime minister ahead of his rallies in Karnataka.

"After Phase II washout, a desperate PM is on a spree of Karnataka rallies today. Instead of lying and fear mongering, these are the questions he should answer," Ramesh said, listing his posers.

"Why have BJP MPs performed so poorly as the people's representatives? After a 7-month delay, why has Centre released less than 20% of drought relief funds? Why is Centre holding up the Upper Bhadra and Mahadayi projects?" Congress leader said on X.

Analysing the transcripts of all debates, PRS found that very few MPs even tried to initiate policies or programmes to address their constituencies' issues, Ramesh said.

"Three MPs did not ask a single question in five years, and five MPs did not participate in debate," he alleged.

"Perhaps the most damning finding was that 14 of the 28 were directly or indirectly involved in abetting communal violence in their localities. Will Modi apologise for foisting these ineffectual MPs on the people of Karnataka? Or was this his design all along to elect non-performing BJP MPs so that he can ignore the voice of Karnataka?" he said. *—PTI*

Jairam Ramesh **PHOTO: PTI**

**ENVIRONMENTAL AWARENESS**

# *Innovative initiative to foster nature education*

**MEGHANA PRASAD**
**BENGALURU, 28 APRIL**

In Karnataka, innovative initiative has taken flight, aimed at nurturing a deeper connection between children and the natural world. Abhisheka Krishnagopal, Programme Manager of Early Bird said, this initiative seeks to harness the timeless allure of birds to instil environmental awareness and appreciation among young minds.

Krishnagopal, reflecting on the essence of the initiative, shares, "Birds are a vital part of our ecosystem. They are a huge part of our food chain. We, in collaboration with Nature Conservation Foundation have come up with this initiative to bring humans and nature as one. And what better way than to train with children when they are still at a learning stage."

Recognising the potential of birds as ambassadors of nature, Early Bird has curated "Prakrutiya Pettige," a nature education kit in Kannada, distributed to 500 Arivu Kendras and Gram Panchayat libraries across Karnataka. Abhisheka emphasises, "This project aims to encourage rural librarians to take on the role of bird educators to help children develop a deeper connection with nature through birds."

Initiative is aimed at nurturing connection between children and the natural world **PHOTO: EARLYBIRD**

The initiative involves conducting workshops in all 31 districts of Karnataka, training 16-20 librarians in each district. Abhisheka highlights the collaborative effort, stating, "We collaborated with 11 external resource people who underwent training conducted by Early Bird on how to connect children to birds through art, games, and nature walks."

Deepak K, an ecologist who conducted training workshops in Ballari and Vijayanagara districts, said, "Many people assume that birding involves walking through jungles. But there are several ecosystems like grasslands where different types of birds thrive. Different birds thrive in different ecosystems and our aim is to connect them with the people."

With plans to expand their reach to every corner of Karnataka, Early Bird envisions a future where nature education transcends boundaries, enriching the lives of countless children and communities. Abhisheka concludes optimistically, "This looks like a promising start for more people and children to get closer to nature and birds."

As the sun sets on their pilot project, the Early Bird initiative stands as a beacon of hope, nurturing a generation of conservationists and stewards of nature, ensuring a brighter tomorrow for generations to come.

*—Salar News*

PHOTO: PTI

## Mismanagement in polls: Kerala Cong urges ECI probe

**T'PURAM, 28 APRIL**

Congress in Kerala on Sunday alleged "terrible mismanagement" of the Lok Sabha polls held in the state on 26 April and urged Election Commission of India (ECI) to initiate a comprehensive inquiry into it. In a letter to the ECI, Leader of Opposition in the Kerala Assembly VD Satheesan alleged that the elections in Kerala were "grossly mismanaged," resulting in significant delays in many booths. Satheesan said that the interval between subsequent votes in many booths saw undue delays, with many voters apparently waiting up to four-and-a-half hours for their turn. "Many voters returned after standing in line for hours at numerous booths in the blazing heat. Furthermore, some of the voters were unable to vote despite arriving booth. *—PTI*

## Congress issues showcause notice to Assam MLA

**GUWAHATI, 28 APRIL**

Assam Congress on Sunday issued a show-cause notice to its MLA Abdur Rashid Mandal for his alleged "anti-party activities." Assam Pradesh Congress Committee president Bhupen Kumar Borah asked the MLA to give a reply to the show-cause notice by tomorrow (29 April), explaining why "disciplinary action" should not be taken against him for his "antiparty activities." "Failure to provide a satisfactory explanation or continuing such activities may result in appropriate and strong disciplinary action," said the notice. "It has been reported to Hon'ble President Assam PCC that you have engaged in antiparty activities by deliberately attempting to influence the district, block and Mandal level party organizations. *—ANI*

## WB: TMC worker killed in 'factional fighting'

**KOLKATA, 28 APRIL**

A Trinamool Congress (TMC) worker was killed in Baguiati area adjoining Kolkata allegedly in a clash between two factions of the party, police said on Sunday. A confrontation took place in Arjunpur West Para in Baguiati on Saturday night, escalating into brick-batting by both sides, in which one person, identified as Sanjeev Das aka Potla, was severely injured and was taken to a hospital, where doctors declared him brought dead, a police officer said. Eleven cases, including those related to the Arms Act, were earlier registered against Das, she said. A total of 13 people have been arrested in connection with the incident, the officer said, adding further investigation is underway. *—PTI*

## SP candidate from UP booked for spreading hatred

**BALLIA/MORADABAD, 28 APRIL**

Police have booked Sanatan Pandey, the Samajwadi Party's candidate from the Ballia Lok Sabha constituency, for allegedly spreading enmity and threatening the district election officer, officials said on Sunday. District officials said an FIR was lodged against Pandey over his statement to reporters on Saturday. Reacting to the FIR, Samajwadi Party chief Akhilesh Yadav asked if the Election Commission will take action against those who make comments on the Constitution, " Ganga-Jamuni Tehzeeb" and brotherhood from "big stages".During the interaction with reporters, Pandey can be heard saying that he had been winning election last time but the administration cost him his victory.*—PTI*

# LS polls: Just 8% of women candidates in first 2 phases

**NEW DELHI, 28 APRIL**

Women constituted only eight per cent of the total 1,618 candidates in the first two phases of the Lok Sabha polls, with political activists saying it reflects a deeper issue of gender bias and that the talk of empowering them rings hollow.

In the first phase of the Lok Sabha polls, there were 135 women candidates while in the second phase, there were 100 women candidates, bringing the combined total for the first two phases to 235 women candidates.

Of the 135 women candidates in phase 1, Tamil Nadu had the highest share at 76, but they account for just 8 per cent of the candidates in the state, while Kerala has the maximum women candidates at 24 in phase 2. Party-wise, Congress has fielded 44 women till now while 69 women have been fielded by the BJP in the first two phases.

This significant gender imbalance has sparked criticism from political analysts and activists, who ask why parties are waiting for the Women's Reservation Bill to be implemented instead of proactively issuing tickets to women.

PHOTO: PTI

- The first phase of the Lok Sabha polls, there were 135 women candidates while in the second phase, there were 100 women candidates

Dr Sushila Ramaswamy, Associate Professor at Delhi University's Jesus and Mary College, said political parties should take concrete steps to promote women's candidacy. "Political parties should have been more proactive and fielded more women candidates," she underscored, citing the effectiveness of seat reservations for women within party structures, as seen in the Britain's

Labour Party.

With women constituting nearly half of India's electorate, their under representation in the candidate pool raises broader questions about the barriers hindering women's full participation in the political sphere, Iftekhar Ahmad Ansari, Associate Professor at the Aligarh Muslim University (AMU), said.

The issue of women's political representation extends beyond numerical quotas to encompass systemic changes in party dynamics and electoral processes, Farhat Jahan, a retired faculty member at the Abdullah Women's College at the AMU said while emphasising the need for gender-sensitive policies that address challenges faced by women in politics.

The second phase was held on 26 April while other phases are scheduled for 7 May, 13 May, 20 May, 25 May and 1 June. *—ANI*

# PM Modi runs govt for billionaires: RaGa in Odisha

## Rahul claims BJD, BJP in reality are working together

**CUTTACK, 28 APRIL**

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi on Sunday alleged that while Prime Minister Narendra Modi runs a government for billionaires from Delhi, Chief Minister Naveen Patnaik leads a dispensation that works for "select people" in Odisha.

Addressing an election rally in Cuttack's Salepur, Gandhi claimed that though BJD and BJP were fighting the electoral battle against each other, in reality, they were working together.

Taking a dig at Patnaik, Gandhi said that though he was the chief minister, BJD government in the state was being run by his aide VK Pandian.

In an apparent reference to the Modi, Gandhi said, "Uncle-ji and Naveen-babu have given Odisha PAANN, meaning Pandian, Amit Shah, Narendra Modi, Naveen Patnaik. They have looted your wealth."

"Rs 9 lakh crore was looted through the mining scam. Rs 20,000 crore was looted through land grabs. The plantation scam was of 15,000 crore. As soon as the Congress government is formed here and in Delhi, we will start giving you back your money," he added.

Gandhi claimed that in a similar way, BRS in Telangana used to work with BJP, and his party ousted it from power.

"We will bring a scheme -- 'pehli naukri pakki'.

All the unemployed youths with degrees and diplomas will get apprenticeships, we will give you the guarantee of your first job for a year. It will be in the public sector, private sector, government hospitals and offices," he added.

Gandhi said that if Congress formed the government in Odisha, it would provide Rs 2,000 per month to women, Rs 3,000 per month to unemployed youths, 200 units of free electricity and LPG at Rs 500 per cylinder.

"While uncle-ji has worked for 22 billionaires, we are going to create crores of lakhpatis," he said.

He alleged that BJP refers to tribals as 'banabasi' or forest-dwellers instead of 'adibasi' or indigenous people. *—PTI*

Congress leader Rahul Gandhi during a public meeting for Lok Sabha elections, in Cuttack district on Sunday

PHOTO: PTI

**JIBE AT OPPOSITION**

# Amit Shah gives 'Modi guarantee' on reservation

**KASGANJ/MAINPURI/ ETAWAH, 28 APRIL**

BJP will neither remove reservations for SCs, STs and OBCs nor will it allow anyone to do so, Union Home Minister Amit Shah said on Sunday, calling it a "Modi guarantee".

Opposition parties have repeatedly claimed that BJP's call for "abki baar 400 paar" is aimed at winning 400 seats in the Lok Sabha elections to have the numbers in Parliament to scrap quotas for Scheduled Castes (SCs), Scheduled Tribes (STs) and Other Backward Classes (OBCs).

Speaking at a rally in support of Rajveer Singh, BJP candidate from Etah-Kasganj, Shah alleged that the Opposition parties ignored people from backward communities, who were granted their rights by Narendra Modi after he became prime minister.

Targeting Congress leader Rahul Gandhi, he said, "Rahul Gandhi says that if BJP gets 400 seats, it will remove reservation. I want to say that we had a full majority for two terms but Modi is a supporter of reservation."

"I want to say that it is a Modi guarantee that neither will BJP remove reservations for SCs, STs and OBCs nor will it allow anyone to do so," Shah said.

Amit Shah PHOTO: PTI

The Home Minister also hit out at Opposition for keeping the Ram temple issue "hanging" and said the public has to choose between "those who opened fire at karsevaks and those who built the Ram temple."

Shah alleged that Samajwadi Party leaders did not attend the ceremony due to fear of losing their vote bank.

Listing BJP government's schemes, including free ration and homes to the poor, Shah said in Kasgang the free ration scheme will continue till 2029 if BJP returns to power.

He also hit out at Samajwadi Party chief Yadav for allegedly fielding only members of his family. *—PTI*

# Delhi Cong Chief resigns, cites interference by leader

**NEW DELHI, 28 APRIL**

In a setback to the Congress ahead of the Lok Sabha polls, senior leader Arvinder Singh Lovely has resigned as the party's Delhi Unit Chief, citing alliance with Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) as one of the reasons.

He said the Delhi Congress unit was against the alliance but the party high command went ahead with it.

In his resignation letter sent to Congress President Mallikarjun Kharge on Saturday, Lovely also said that he found himself "handicapped" as all unanimous decisions taken by senior Delhi unit leaders have been "unilaterally vetoed" by AICC Delhi in-charge Deepak Babria.

Arvinder Singh PHOTO: PTI

This comes days after former Delhi minister and AICC member Rajkumar Chauhan resigned from the party following an altercation with Babria.

Reacting to the development, Delhi BJP on Sunday said this "explosion" was set in motion when the Congress started naming candidates for the Lok Sabha elections, while AAP said this is an internal matter of Congress.

A minister in the Sheila Dikshit government, Lovely was appointed as the Delhi Congress Chief in August last year.

Lovely also criticised Congress North East Delhi candidate Kanhaiya Kumar for heaping praise on Delhi Chief Minister Arvind Kejriwal, who is behind bars in a money laundering case.

Lovely alleged that AICC in-charge Babria forced him to suspend senior party leader Raj Kumar Chauhan.

Senior AAP leader Saurabh Bharadwaj said this is an internal matter of the Congress.

Lovely was first elected as an MLA in 1998 from Gandhi Nagar. *—PTI*

# EC asks AAP to modify campaign song

**NEW DELHI, 28 APRIL**

Aam Aadmi Party (AAP) on Sunday claimed the Election Commission of India (ECI) has "banned" its Lok Sabha campaign song "Jail Ka Jawab, Vote Se Denge", but officials of the Delhi poll body said AAP was asked to modify the contents of the song since it violated EC's guidelines and advertising codes.The over two-minute campaign song, penned and sung by AAP MLA Dilip Pandey, was released at the party headquarters here on Thursday.

Sources from the Delhi Chief Electoral Office said the song was not banned but the party was asked to resubmit the proposal with certain modifications, in accordance with Advertising Codes prescribed under the Cable Television Network Rules, 1994 and ECI guideline/ norms circulated through a letter dated 24 August 2023, for the certification.

The Delhi poll panel said certain images and phrases are "slanderous" remarks and "criticism of the ruling party on the basis of unverified facts" and also cast aspersions on the judiciary and police.

Addressing a press conference, AAP senior leader Atishi accused the Election Commission of becoming a "political weapon of the BJP" and turning a blind eye to its violations. *—PTI*

## REPOLLING IN OUTER MANIPUR'S POLLING BOOTHS ON 30 APRIL

**IMPHAL, 28 APRIL**

The Election Commission of India (ECI) declared the polls conducted at six polling stations in the Outer Manipur Parliamentary Constituency as void and announced fresh elections in these stations on 30 April.

"The ECI has, under Sections 58(2) and 58A(2) of the Representation of the People Act, 1951, directed that the poll taken on April 26, 2024 (Friday) in respect of 6 polling stations listed in the table below of 2-Outer Manipur (ST) Parliamentary Constituency to be void and appointed April 30, 2024 (Tuesday) as the date for taking fresh poll at the said polling stations with hours of poll from 7:00 AM to 4:00 PM," an official statement said.

Chief Electoral Officer, Pradeep Kumar Jha further appealed to the voters of these polling stations to come out in large numbers to exercise their franchise.Voting for the 2024 Lok Sabha concluded in Manipur as 13 of the Assembly segments in Manipur cast their votes in the second phase on Friday. *—ANI*

PHOTO: PTI

**ELECTION CAMPAIGN**

NCP candidate Sunetra Pawar plays cricket with women cricketers during election campaign in Pune on Sunday PHOTO: PTI

## Expelled BJP leader Usman briefly detained in Bikaner

**JAIPUR, 28 APRIL**

Usman Ghani, who was recently expelled from BJP, was briefly taken into preventive custody in Bikaner for not allowing police to check his vehicle, officials said on Sunday.

The Bikaner police took Ghani into custody under section 151 of Code of Criminal Procedure (arrest to prevent the commission of cognisable offence) on Saturday and later produced before Additional District Magistrate (ADM) for release, they said.

The incident took place in front of Mukta Prasad Nagar police station of Bikaner. *—PTI*

# Setback to oppn, several SP leaders join BJP

**LUCKNOW, 28 APRIL**

In a setback to Opposition amid Lok Sabha polls, several Samajwadi Party leaders joined BJP in Lucknow on Sunday.Former Samajwadi Party MLA Jai Choubey and several other leaders including Balram Yadav, and Jagat Jaiswal joined BJP in the presence of Uttar Pradesh Deputy Chief Minister Brajesh Pathak.

"Welcome, and congratulations to all of you. Those working at the block level are also coming along with them, they have a big responsib
ility in their hands," Pathak said.

"You all have decided to join BJP. Under Modi's leadership, BJP has reached to masses. Under Modi's guidance, we have taken a resolution of 'Viksit Bharat' and I hope you all will contribute to it," Pathak added.

Uttar Pradesh, which sends the maximum number of MPs, 80, to Parliament, is voting in all seven phases.

Voting for phase one was held on 19 April in eight parliamentary constituencies and phase two polling for eight other constituencies was concluded on 26 April.

Amroha, Meerut, Baghpat, Ghaziabad, Gautam Budh Nagar, Aligarh, Mathura, and Bulandshahr voted in the second phase of the Lok Sabha election on 26 April.Next, the state will once again poll in phases three and four on 7 May and 13 May. *—ANI*

**ON DEMAND FOR A 'FREE' TIBET**

# *Want to tell the world reality: Tibetian girl*

**DHARAMSHALA, 28 APRIL**

On 21 October, 2015, a 15-year-old Tibetan girl along with her sister was picked up by Chinese authorities in the Tibetan county of Ngaba and put behind bars for three years for publicly displaying portraits of the Dalai Lama and demanding a "free" Tibet.

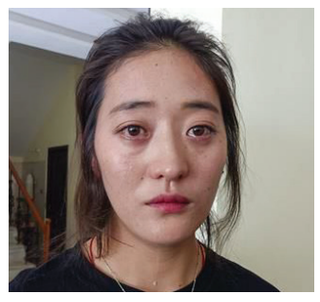
In June last year, the girl, Namkyi, arrived in India weeks after entering Nepal following a 10-day arduous journey on foot with a "firm" resolve to aware people across the world about 'Chinese repression' in Tibet, according to her account.

Namkyi, now 24, says she is currently studying at 'Sherab Gatsel Ling', an educational institution being run by the Tibetan government-in-exile in Himachal Pradesh's Dharamshala.

"What the Chinese government is showing to the entire world about Tibet is in total contrast to the real situation. The Tibetan people are living under increasing fear and repression," she told a small group of journalists.

"China has been trying to undermine Tibet's identity," she alleges.

The Tibetan activists have been accusing China of denying religious freedom and trying to stamp out Tibet's cultural heritage and identity. Beijing has been rejecting the charges.



Namkyi PHOTO: PTI

"Not more than 10 minutes into our march, four or five police officers came from behind and snatched the portraits (of the Dalai Lama) from our hands," she said about the 21 October, 2015 protest.

"They handcuffed our hands, put us into the police van, and took us away to the detention centre of Ngaba County. Then, they took us to another detention centre in Barkam city."

Namkyi said she and her sister were subjected to severe torture.

"We were interrogated in a small room where a heater was switched on with excessive heat. Different interrogators asked various questions such as who incited us to hold the protest; where did we get the portraits of the Dalai Lama and whether we had any acquaintances from outside etc," she said. *—PTI*

PHOTO: X

## Pak man who entered India sent back

**CHANDIGARH, 28 APRIL**

A Pakistani man who was apprehended after inadvertently entering Indian territory was handed over to the Pakistan Rangers on humanitarian grounds, a BSF spokesperson said on Sunday. Border Security Force (BSF) troops apprehended the Pakistani national near the border fence in Punjab's Fazilka district on Saturday, the spokesperson said. During questioning, it was learnt that he was unaware of the international border's alignment and had inadvertently crossed into Indian territory, the official said. Nothing objectionable was found on the man during his search, the spokesperson added.A flag meeting was conducted with the Pakistan Rangers to express concern over its failure to restrict unwarranted movement of the Pakistani national.*—PTI*

## Kerala: One dead, three injured in stabbing incident

**KOTTAYAM, 28 APRIL**

A 26-year-old man was allegedly stabbed to death, and three others, including a woman, were injured in a scuffle that occurred during a party organised at a home near Pala in this district in the wee hours of Sunday, police said. The incident, reported from Kollappally Mankara area at around 2am, occurred when friends and relatives assembled at a home to celebrate the holy communion of a child, engaged in a verbal spat during a drinking party, they said. The man, identified as Libin Jose, died, and three people, including a 55-year-old woman, her relative, and another person, were injured in the stabbing incident using a pair of scissors. Following the incident, Pala police reached the spot and took the accused person into custody.*—PTI*

## UP: Teen girl raped for 3 days; accused held

**LAKHIMPUR KHERI, 28 APRIL**

A 17-year-old girl was allegedly raped by a man who held her hostage for three days here, police said on Saturday. The accused, Aman,21, has been arrested and sent to jail today, they said. On 21 April, the girl's mother filed a complaint with Dhaurahra police in which she accused Aman of forcibly taking away her when she was on her way back home on 19 April. She alleged that the accused held her daughter captive at his home, raped and assaulted her, police said.According to the FIR, the girl somehow got free from the captivity and returned home on 21 April. The accused was arrested and sent to jail on Saturday. *—PTI*

## 2 cops killed, dozen injured in Bihar accident

**GOPALGANJ, 28 APRIL**

Two policemen were killed and over a dozen injured when the van in which they were travelling was hit by a speeding container truck from behind in Bihar's Gopalganj district on Sunday, police said. The incident took place near Barhima Bazar around noon when the police team was going to Supaul for the third phase of the Lok Sabha election duty."The van carrying policemen on election duty had halted near Barhima Bazar when a speeding container truck rammed into it from behind. Two policemen died on the spot and over a dozen sustained injuries."All injured have been admitted to the nearest government hospital and their condition is reported to be stable. The container has been seized by the local police,"said the office of the Superintendent of Police of Gopalganj *—PTI*

# 'Talks with China smooth, India will never bow down'

## Defence min said India has become a very powerful country

**AHMEDABAD, 28 APRIL**

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh on Sunday said talks between India and China are going smoothly and in a good environment, and India will never bow down.

Singh, who is in Ahmedabad to campaign for BJP candidates contesting the Lok Sabha elections, said India has become a powerful country from a military standpoint and wants to maintain good relations with its neighbours.

"India is no longer a weak India. India has also become a powerful country from a military point of view. We want to maintain good relations with our neighbouring countries," the minister said when asked about Congress leader Rahul Gandhi's accusation against the Narendra Modi government over Chinese aggression.

"I understand that we should wait for the outcome of the talks. But I want to assure the countrymen that India has not bowed down anywhere, nor will it ever bow down," he said.

Defence Minister Rajnath Singh addressing a press conference in Ahmedabad PHOTO: X/@ @BJP4Gujarat

Singh also expressed confidence that India's defence exports, which crossed the Rs 21,000 crore mark in the financial 2023-24, will increase going forward.

"In 2014, we exported Rs 600 crore defence items, but now the figure has crossed Rs 21,000 crore, and I can say that it is going to increase," he said.

- The minister said the Modi government is committed to ensuring that defence items, whether missiles and other weapons, bombs or tanks, should be made in India and by Indians

The minister said the Modi government is committed to ensuring that defence items, whether missiles and other weapons, bombs or tanks, should be made in India and by Indians.

"Today, we have achieved defence production worth more than Rs 1 lakh crore," he said. *—PTI*

**NAGA STIR ENTERS DAY 3**

# People rushing to Assam for basic commodities

**KOHIMA, 28 APRIL**

People made a beeline to neighbouring Assam to buy essential commodities as the indefinite shutdown of businesses to protest "extortion" by Naga political groups threw normal life out of gear in Nagaland, with the stir entering the third day on Sunday.

The shutdown was called by the Dimapur Chamber of Commerce and Industries (DCCI) on Friday also to protest alleged government inaction to protect businesses in Dimapur, the commercial hub of the state.

The Confederation of Nagaland Chamber of Commerce and Industries (CNCCI) supported the call, following which shutdowns were imposed in other districts from Saturday.

Markets remained shut across the state, as a result of which people from Nagaland, especially those living along the inter-state boundary with Assam, reportedly went to the neighbouring state to buy essential commodities.

People made a beeline to Assam to buy essential commodities due to shutdown of businesses PHOTO: X/@the_hindu

No restriction on the movement of people and traffic has been imposed.

The Confederation of Nagaland Chamber of Commerce and Industries (CNCCI) announced that the indefinite state-wide shutdown would continue but would be relaxed only for six hours from noon to 6pm on Monday to allow the public to procure essential items.

CNCCI president Khekugha Muru said the decision was taken in consideration of the fact that the shutdown was imposed in many districts without giving prior notice to the people.

CNCCI urged the government to take steps to stop "unabated" extortion, and intimidation by underground groups. *—PTI*

# Delhi: 149 pc surge in cases of mobile phone use while driving since Jan

A total of 15,846 motorists were booked for this offence, significantly higher than cases reported last year PHOTO:PIXABAY

- According to the police, a thorough analysis of the top ten traffic circles, including Defence Colony, Punjabi Bagh, Karol Bagh, and Safdarjung Enclave among others, with the most challans issued in 2024 has also been carried out by the Delhi Traffic Police

**NEW DELHI, 28 APRIL**

A major surge of nearly 149 per cent in prosecutions related to mobile phone usage while driving in Delhi since 1 January, as compared to the corresponding period last year, the traffic police data revealed.

The statistics, shared by the Delhi Traffic Police, indicate a sharp rise in violations of mobile phone usage laws while driving.

From 1 January to 15 April, a total of 15,846 motorists were booked for this offence, significantly higher than the 6,369 cases reported in 2023, it said.

"In recent months, the traffic police have observed a disturbing surge in use of mobile phones while driving. This concerning trend has prompted the unit to undertake stringent measures to ensure the safety of all road users," a senior traffic police officer said.

According to the police, a thorough analysis of the top ten traffic circles, including Defence Colony, Punjabi Bagh, Karol Bagh, and Safdarjung Enclave among others, with the most challans issued in 2024 has also been carried out by the Delhi Traffic Police.

Traffic police said that the Delhi Traffic Police is actively engaging in public awareness campaigns to educate motorists about the dangers of using mobile phones while driving.

"We urge all members of the public to prioritise safety on the roads by refraining from using mobile phones while driving," the officer said. *—PTI*

## ACTOR SAHIL HELD IN MAHADEV BETTING APP CASE

**MUMBAI, 28 APRIL**

Actor Sahil Khan was brought to Mumbai from Chhattisgarh on Sunday after being detained by the Mumbai Crime Branch's Special Investigative Team (SIT) in connection with the Mahadev Betting app case.

"I believe in the judiciary of the country," Khan told reporters as he was escorted by security officials.

He was presented before a court today, which has sent him to police custody till 1 May.Mumbai Police has also seized actor Sahil Khan's passport as part of ongoing legal proceedings.

Khan was apprehended on Saturday from Chhattisgarh, where he had reportedly been evading authorities for nearly 40 hours.

His attempts to secure a pre-arrest bail failed as the Bombay High Court rejected his plea.Khan had fled Mumbai, constantly changing his location to evade authorities.

The actor stands accused of running a betting site and promoting illegal betting activities. *—ANI*

# Land grabbing case: Court junks RJD man's bail plea

**MUZAFFARPUR, 28 APRIL**

A court in Bihar's Muzaffarpur district has dismissed the anticipatory bail plea of Vijay Kumar Shukla alias Munna Shukla, the RJD candidate from Vaishali Lok Sabha seat, in a case of alleged land grab.

Shukla had moved the anticipatory bail petition on April 3 in the case wherein his wife Annu Shukla, a former MLA from Lalganj, is also an accused along with three others.

A case of alleged land grab was registered against Shukla, also a former JD(U) MLA, and others by the Sadar police station (Muzaffarpur) in August 2023, following a directive by a local court. The court had issued the directive on the basis of a complaint filed by an aggrieved party.

It was alleged in the complaint that the accused grabbed the land on the National Highway connecting Muzaffarpur and Hajipur on the basis of forged documents.

PHOTO:X

Shukla, who recently joined RJD and is contesting Lok Sabha polls from Vaishali as the nominee of the 'Grand Alliance', told PTI on Sunday, "The case against me is a conspiracy to malign my image. I have full faith in the judiciary. I will challenge this order of the court before the High Court."Shukla is pitted against Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas)'s Veena Devi. The Chirag Paswan-led Lok Janshakti Party (Ram Vilas) is an alliance partner of the NDA in Bihar. Vaishali along with Valmiki Nagar, Paschim Champaran, Purvi Champaran, Sheohar, Gopalganj, Siwan and Maharajganj will go for polls on 25May. *—PTI*

**HUMANITY BEYOND BORDERS**

# *Pak teen travels to India for new heart*

**KARACHI/CHENNAI, 28 APRIL**

The heartwarming story of a 19-year-old Pakistani girl getting a new lease on life after a successful heart transplant in India highlights how borders can be eased for humanitarian purposes and the challenges faced by heart patients in the neighbouring country.

Ayesha Rashan from Karachi underwent a heart transplant surgery at MGM Healthcare, Chennai.

After a suitable brain-dead donor was available, she underwent cardiac transplantation on 31 January, 2024. Following procedures, she was discharged this month.

Dr KR Balakrishnan, Chairman, Cardiac Sciences Director, Institute of Heart and Lung Transplant and Mechanical Circulatory Support, said Ayesha first came to them in 2019 when she was 14 years of age with severe heart failure and a very poorly functioning heart.

Pakistan's Ayesha Rashan, 19, underwent a heart transplant from a 69-yr old donor at a Chennai hospital PHOTO: PTI

"She became very sick and had a cardiac arrest and had to be resuscitated with CPR and put on a machine called ECMO to sustain circulation then we put in an artificial heart pump that time and eventually she recovered and went back to her country," he said.

"Over the next couple of years, she became sick again because one of her valves started leaking...and she developed severe failure on the right side of the heart and developed an infection and it became very difficult to treat her in that country," he added.

Balakrishnan said getting a visa for her was very difficult.

"Her mother is a single parent, they had no money or resources. We had to take care of the entire expenses including repeated hospitalisation," Dr Balakrishnan told PTI.

Ayesha underwent surgery with the support of Aishwarya Trust, a Chennai-based NGO, and other transplant patients' contributions.

The transplant was done after getting a donor organ from a brain-dead elderly man from Delhi.

"The biggest challenge was there was no money," he said. The condition required Rs 30 to Rs 40 lakhs to treat.

Ayesha, who aspires to be a fashion designer, thanked the Indian government for giving her a visa to visit the country for the treatment.

Ayesha's mother said the problem is that Pakistan does not have such a facility. *—PTI*

**IN UTTARAKHAND**

# IAF helicopters assists fire fighting for second day

**DEHRADUN, 28 APRIL**

The firefighting operation in Uttarakhand's forests with the help of an Indian Air Force (IAF) helicopter continued for the second day on Sunday with the blaze brought to control in several areas, officials said.

Efforts have also intensified to extinguish the raging forest fires in the state, especially in the worst-affected areas of Nainital, Haldwani and Ramnagar forest divisions, forest officials here said on Sunday.

The forest fires are gradually being controlled with the flames already doused in many areas.

The fires in Marora and Khanana civil areas in Maniknath range of the Narendranagar forest division have been completely extinguished, they said.

The forest blaze in Nainital and adjoining areas is gradually being brought under control after the deployment of an IAF helicopter for the firefighting operations on Saturday morning, Chief Minister Pushkar Singh Dhami said after reviewing the situation in the Kumaon region on Saturday night.

PHOTO:X

According to the Indian Air Force, a Mi-17 V5 helicopter has been deployed in Nainital and surrounding areas to douse the flames.

Apart from the IAF helicopter and Army personnel, Prantiya Rakshak Dal volunteers and homeguard personnel have also been roped in to help in the firefighting operations, Kumaon Commissioner Deepak Rawat said.

Additional government vehicles, two each for the three forest divisions, have been provided to rush firefighting teams to the affected areas, he added. *—ANI*

# Mosque cleric killed by masked men in Ajmer

**JAIPUR, 28 APRIL**

A group of three masked men allegedly beat to death a 30-year-old cleric of a mosque in Rajasthan's Ajmer, police said on Sunday.

A case has been lodged in the matter and efforts are on to identify and nab the accused, they said.

According to the police, the incident took place around 2am on Saturday when the accused allegedly entered the mosque located in Kanchan Nagar under the Ramganj police station limits and attacked the cleric, Mohammad Tahir, with sticks.

Tahir died on the spot. Six children were also present inside the mosque when the incident occurred, the police said.

The trio allegedly threatened the children not to disclose the matter and took away their mobile phones so that they could not inform anyone or call for help, they said.

After the accused fled, the children came out of the mosque and told people about the incident, they added.

Tahir used to teach children in the mosque, according to the police.

SHO Ramganj Ravindra Singh said Tahir's body was handed over to his family members after they arrived in Ajmer from Uttar Pradesh.

A case has been registered over the matter against unidentified people under Section 302 (murder) of the Indian Penal Code, the SHO said. *—PTI*

# Defence guard injured in gunfight with terrorists

**JAMMU, 28 APRIL**

A Village Defence Guard (VDG) member was injured in a gunfight with terrorists in a remote village in Jammu and Kashmir's Udhampur district early Sunday, police said.

The exchange of fire was reported from Panara village of Basantgarh when a patrolling party of police and VDGs confronted the suspected terrorists around 7.45am, they said.

Police and Army reinforcements were rushed to the village and a massive search operation is underway to neutralise the hiding terrorists, they said.

After the initial firing, the terrorists, whose number was not known immediately, fled deep into the forest area and are being chased by the security forces, police said.

"After receipt of inputs regarding movement of suspicious individuals late Saturday evening, J&K Police activated the security grid in Basantgarh police station limits. Today morning, a party of police picket Sang carrying along with them VDG members proceeded towards Chochru Gala heights where a face-off ensued with a group of hiding terrorists," a police spokesperson said.

He said one VDG member was injured in the initial exchange of fire and was evacuated to hospital. *—PTI*

**FESTIVAL OF COLOURS**

Revelers play with colors during a Festival of Colors procession at Bull Run Special Events Center, on Saturday, in Centerville, Va. The festival features traditional Indian music, dancing, and a color run ***PHOTO: PTI***

# Did cloud seeding cause floods in Dubai?

Extremely heavy rainfall events, like the one that caused floods in many countries across West Asia in the second week of April 2024, have become 10-40 per cent heavier according to a rapid attribution study by the World Weather Attribution (WWA).

WWA is a global consortium of climate scientists who study the role played by human-induced climate change in the occurrence, frequency and intensity of extreme weather events such as heatwaves, droughts, cold spells, extreme rainfall, floods and storms. Such studies come under the purview of attribution science.

Scientists from universities, research organisations and meteorological agencies in Saudi Arabia, Switzerland, Sweden, the Netherlands, Germany, the United Kingdom and the United States, were involved in the study.

"While the researchers could not precisely determine how much of the increase is due to human-caused climate change, they find that warming, caused by burning fossil fuels, is the most likely explanation for the increasing rainfall," noted a statement. .

The scientists also highlighted that the excessive rainfall could have been caused due to the El Nino conditions prevalent in the equatorial Pacific Ocean. They said most of the previous record rainfall events have occurred during El Nino years.

El Nino is the warmer than normal phase of the El Nino Southern Oscillation phenomenon that occurs in the equatorial Pacific Ocean and is generally responsible for heavier than usual rainfall in West Asia, especially during March and April.

Dubai received more than a year and a half's worth of rainfall in 24 hours on April 14-15 that submerged the city, including its airport and most the freeways. Four people lost their lives because of flooding.

The Al Ain weather station in the United Arab Emirates (UAE) recorded 254 mm of rainfall, the highest in 75 years, when records began, according to the National Center of Meteorology of UAE. In Oman, 20 people were killed due to flash flooding related incidents. There was also heavy rainfall in Bahrain and parts of Saudi Arabia..

Experts says climate change as the cause for flood and not cloud seeding ***PHOTO: X/ @SPRINTERFACTORY***

The scientists analysed observations of single day heavy rainfall events in a world that is 1.2°C warmer than pre-industrial times and found the current event, that occurred due to a low pressure system over the region, to be 10-40 per cent heavier than a world that is 1.2°C cooler.

Further, to characterise and quantify the exact role of human-induced climate change in enhancing the rainfall, the study authors used climate models. But the available climate models could not arrive at a trend as the results are highly uncertain because of the high year-to-year variability in rainfall.

The scientists can be sure about the role of climate change when the observational data analysis matches with the trend results from the climate models. Which is not the case for this particular event.

"The disagreement between model results and observations prevents us from concluding with certainty that human-induced climate change is the main driver making this event more likely," said the authors in the summary of findings.

"However, while multiple reasons could explain the absence of a trend in our model results, we have no alternative explanation for a trend in observations other than the expectation of heavy rainfall increasing in a warmer climate," they added.

The study also talked about the lack of early warnings for people travelling in both UAE and Oman as many people died trapped in their cars. The cities in both countries are highly vulnerable to flooding events.

The analysis flagged that 80 per cent and 85 per cent of the total populations in Oman and the UAE respectively, live in flood-prone and low-lying areas that are highly exposed.

"Because of various challenges to their abilities to respond to flood risk, particularly vulnerable groups tend to include older adults, individuals with disabilities, women with caregiving responsibilities, racial/ethnic minorities, migrant workers, and lower-income groups."

The study authors also listed the presence of surfaces with "limited permeability and absorptive capacity" because of urban development, extremely arid soils and lack of drainage as the other reasons for the floods, apart from the extreme rainfall. They also found cloud seeding operations to have had no involvement in the cause or intensity of the rainfall event.

"Model uncertainties meant we couldn't complete the last step of the analysis to precisely quantify how much of the increasing rainfall is due to climate change," said Mariam Zachariah, researcher at the Grantham Institute — Climate Change and the Environment, Imperial College London.

"However, multiple lines of evidence point to climate change as the most likely explanation for the increasing rainfall," she added.

"While we can't stop El Nino, we can stop climate change. The solution is to stop burning fossil fuels, to stop deforestation," said Friederike Otto, senior lecturer in climate science at the Grantham Institute — Climate Change and the Environment, Imperial College London.

"At COP28 in Dubai, the world agreed to 'transition away' from fossil fuels. Nearly half a year later, countries are still opening new oil and gas fields," she added.

*—Downtoearth*

SALAR سالار

# 'Traffic noise can increase risk of cardiovascular disease'

Spike in traffic noise can increase the risk of cardiovascular diseases, including heart attack, researchers have found.

Having found evidence linking traffic noise and the risk of developing heart and related conditions, researchers are calling for this type of noise pollution to be recognised as a risk factor for cardiovascular diseases.

The international team of researchers reviewed epidemiological data, which provides evidence for identifying risk factors of a certain disease.

In their review, the researchers found evidence that for every 10 decibel increase in noise coming from road traffic, the risk of developing cardiovascular diseases, including heart attack, stroke and diabetes, heightened by 3.2 per cent.

In particular, they said, night-time traffic noise that disrupts and shortens sleep time can increase levels of stress hormones in the blood vessels, thereby promoting inflammation, high blood pressure and vascular diseases.

"It is also important for us that traffic noise is now finally recognised as a risk factor for cardiovascular disease due to the strong evidence," Thomas Mnzel, senior Professor at the University Medical Centre Mainz, Germany, and lead author of the study published in the journal Circulation Research, said.

The researchers also suggested strategies for local authorities to mitigate noise from road, rail and air traffic.

Traffic noise can cause stress in blood vessels ***PHOTO: UNSPLASH***

- For every 10 decibel increase in noise coming from road traffic, the risk of developing cardiovascular diseases, heart attack, heightened by 3.2 per cent

Erecting noise barriers along busy roads in densely populated areas can significantly reduce noise levels up to 10 decibels, they said.

Constructing roads using noise-reducing asphalt has been shown to reduce levels by 3-6 decibels, the authors said.

Other strategies they suggested included limiting driving speed, and developing and promoting the use of low-noise tyres.

At the individual level, the researchers recommended using bicycles, shared rides and public transport for lowering urban road traffic noise.

For reducing aircraft noise, strategies like optimising and planning air routes using GPS to direct them away from densely populated areas can be adopted. Imposing bans for take-offs and landings during night-time can significantly reduce air traffic noise, the researchers advised.

Regular maintenance of railways, including brake upgrades, was also suggested for lowering rail traffic noise. *—PTI*

Using bicycles and public transport can help lowering traffic noise ***PHOTO: PIXABAY***

**LETTERS** write to us at salarenglishdigital@gmail.com

# *Indian diaspora in US seeks answers for death of Indian students*

Dejected. That's how Jey Sushil, a student at Washington University in St Louis, Missouri, says he feels. Sushil is still shaken by the death in February of fellow student Amarnath Ghosh, a 34-year-old classical dancer from India. Local police are investigating it as a homicide case.

Sushil says he found out about Ghosh's death through a friend in India before receiving any information from his university.

"They told us after two days. Students are not very happy with the overall response. It's like, who cares about how Indians feel?"

Ghosh was fatally shot off campus in a city street. The university clarified that it communicates a student's death only after law enforcement confirms the identity, a process that takes time, and with consent from the student's next of kin.

Calling it a "horrible tragedy", the VC of Marketing and Communications at Washington University in St. Louis, Julie Flory said, "We shared this sad news with members of our community as soon as we could and according to the wishes of Amarnath's closest contacts."

The St. Louis Police Department said it "takes 48 hours to establish identity" of the deceased and "in many cases, much longer".

Ghosh is among the 11 Indian or Indian-origin students who have died in the US so far this year, sparking fears about personal safety within the community.

The causes of death have varied, from hypothermia to suicide to shooting. Experts say there is no discernible link between these unrelated incidents. As each tragedy echoes through campuses, students carry on with their daily routines, balancing fears amid academic demands.

"We avoid going out after dark. We have identified places in the city that are unsafe in the evenings. What else can we do?" Mr Sushil asks.

Like him, others also complain that their universities do not report the deaths on time, and they find out about them through Indian media or from relatives back home.

Mohammad Abdul Arfath, 25-year-old student of Cleveland State University (CSE), was found dead earlier this month after he went missing in March.

A student, who wanted to stay anonymous and joined the college at the same time as Arfath, said he found out about his death through a WhatsApp message from his parents.

Neel Acharya, 19, was found dead on Purdue University campus ***PHOTO: X/ @ANDYPARACKAL***

"My parents reminded me that I have to stay on guard," he said.

Nearly 267,000 Indians enrolled in US universities in 2022-23 and the number is projected to reach a million by 2030.

"The desire, the draw or pull of an American degree is very strong in India and appealing to Indian families," says Rajika Bhandari, a New York-based education expert.

Sangay Mishra, an associate professor at Drew University in New Jersey, says there is no "clear pattern" that connects the deaths and that "it's important to not fall into the trap of building an overarching narrative that it's happening because they're Indians".

"I haven't seen anything which suggests that these are cases of racial hostility or attacks based on race."

Indian parents say they try to maintain regular contact with their children.

"It scares us whenever we hear such kind of news sitting far away in India," says Meenu Awal, whose son studies at the University of Southern California.

Awal says that she's instructed her son to "not retaliate" even in a case of a robbery. "I have told him to just give cash or whatever, and walk away."

Neetu Marda from Jaipur city says she talks to her daughter at New York University every day and keeps her friends' phone numbers handy. "I ask her not to go out alone with unknown people."

Along with physical safety, universities are aware of the psychological impact on students.

"It's become clear that international students are increasingly facing mental health issues which are a combination of immense financial pressure and academic pressure to keep up their level so that their visa status is not affected," says Bhandari, the education expert.

"It's a huge psychological burden when they're thousands of miles away from home."

Others note that the students, hailing from varied economic and cultural backgrounds, experience their time abroad differently.

"International students face unique stressors when they leave their support systems and navigate a new culture," says Reena Arora-Sanchez, executive director of communications at CSU.

The Indian embassy in the US offers guidelines for students to contact them and hosts regular online and in-person open house sessions.

At Georgia Institute of Technology, Pratham Mehta, the president of the India Club, says they've reached out to the institute's "large Indian student population".

There are various on-campus therapy services available, and the club also facilitates connections to the Indian consulate for students feeling unsafe. Additionally, CSU provides an app linking students to the university's police department and offers a free safety escort service for campus and nearby student housing.

In February, US Ambassador to India Eric Garcetti said, "We are very committed to making sure that Indians know that the United States is a wonderful place to study and to be safe."

American universities know that there is a "huge and growing appetite among Indian students to study abroad", Ms Bhandari says. "Institutions are in a tough place trying to capitalise on this interest but at the same time, there's a clear acknowledgement that there are very real concerns around personal safety."

Despite uncertainties, the US remains a sought-after destination for students. *—BBC News*

PHOTO: PTI

## Ishaq Dar appointed Pak's Deputy PM

**ISLAMABAD, 28 APRIL**

Pakistan's Foreign Minister Ishaq Dar was on Sunday appointed as the Deputy prime minister of the country, according to a notification issued by the Cabinet Division. Dar, 73, a chartered accountant and a veteran politician, belongs to Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif's Pakistan Muslim League-Nawaz (PML-N) party. According to the notification, the appointment was made by Prime Minister Sharif "with immediate effect and until further orders". Dar, a close Sharif family associate, has served as finance minister in two previous governments. He was considered the party's answer to all economic problems, serving as finance minister for the fourth and last time in the previous Pakistan Democratic Movement coalition government. *—PTI*

## Pak PM Sharif raises wheat procurement target

**ISLAMABAD, 28 APRIL**

Pakistan Prime Minister Shehbaz Sharif has finally responded to farmer protests in his country over delays in the grain's buying process by ordering an increase in the wheat procurement target from USD 1.4 million tonnes to USD 1.8 million tonnes, Dawn reported. Further, Sharif has instructed the Pakistan Agricultural Storage and Services Corporation Limited (Passco), Pakistan's national grain procurement and storage agency, to expedite the buying process to assist growers. According to Dawn, these directives were issued by the Prime Minister before his departure for Saudi Arabia to attend the World Economic Forum meeting, as per a statement from the Prime Minister's Office. The official press release stated that decision "a big relief" for farmers, adding that it was taken following complaints from wheat growers.*—ANI*

## Nepal a suitable destination for investment: PM

**KATHMANDU, 28 APRIL**

Nepal is a suitable destination for investment and there are immense opportunities in the country, Prime Minister Pushpa Kamal Dahal 'Prachanda' said on Sunday as he inaugurated a key investment summit here that will see the participation of around 1,800 people from various countries, including 140 from India. Inaugurating the third edition of the Nepal Investment Summit 2024 with the theme 'Emerging Nepal', Prachanda also said that Nepal is a potential country for investment from legal, geographical and strategic perspectives. "Nepal is a suitable destination for foreign investment," the Prime Minister said. *—PTI*

## Dubai PM approves designs of AED128B passenger terminal

**ABU DHABI, 28 APRIL**

Sheikh Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Vice President, Prime Minister and Ruler of Dubai, reviewed the strategic plan of the Dubai Aviation Engineering Projects and approved designs for the new passenger terminal at Al Maktoum International Airport, which will be the largest in the world when fully operational. Set to be built at a cost of AED128 billion, the new terminal will ultimately enable the airport to handle a passenger capacity of 260 million annually. The approval came during Sheikh Mohammed's visit to the Dubai Aviation Engineering Projects, accompanied by Sheikh Hamdan bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, Crown Prince of Dubai and Chairman of Dubai Executive Council, and Sheikh Maktoum bin Mohammed bin Rashid Al Maktoum, and others.*—ANI*

FIGHTING AGAINST WAR

# Palestinian protest: More students held at US Varsity

### Green Party presidential candidate Jill Stein was also detained

**WASHINGTON, 28 APRIL**

Hundreds more people were arrested at college campuses across the US on Saturday as student protests against the war in Gaza continue.

Green Party presidential candidate Jill Stein was among those detained by police. Protestors are demanding institutions boycott companies and individuals with ties to Israel. But some Jewish students have complained about alleged antisemitism from some demonstrators.

A spokesperson for Stein said she was one of around 80 people to have been arrested at Washington University in St Louis, Missouri. The Green Party presidential candidate was not currently believed to be facing charges, the spokesperson added.

California State Polytechnic became the latest to announce it would move to remote teaching. The protests have seen in-person teaching cancelled and graduation ceremonies postponed. Tents first appeared on the college green at Columbia on 17 April. The protests then spread across the country after police in riot gear were sent to clear the tents, arresting more than 100 students. Shortly after, students erected another protest camp at Yale University in Connecticut.

At Northeastern University in Boston, over 100 protesters were arrested for trespassing on Saturday by the Massachusetts State Police after refusing to clear their tents from college grounds, according to a police statement. The camp was cleared by police.

Northeastern University wrote on X that "demonstrations had been infiltrated by professional organisers" with no connection to the university. Antisemitic slurs had been heard, it added, saying: "We cannot tolerate this kind of hate on campus." Protest leaders strongly rejected the allegations.

Police arrest protestors as they block traffic during a Pro-Palestinian demonstration demanding a permanent cease-fire in Gaza *PHOTO: PTI*

- A spokesperson for Stein said she was one of around 80 people to have been arrested at Washington University in St Louis, Missouri

At the University of South California, pro-Palestinian demonstrators returned to campus days after police were called to clear a protest at the university's Alumni Park. The protest was reportedly mostly peaceful but the university administration reported "vandalism" to campus property after Saturday's protest.

The university said the campus had been vandalised "by individuals who are part of the group that has continued to illegally camp on our campus", adding that a statue and fountain had been damaged. The campus would be temporarily closed to non-residents, the university said.

*—BBC News*

Demonstrators want gender-based violence to be declared a national emergency *PHOTO: X/ ABC NEWS*

# Aussies urge stern laws on violence against women

**SYDNEY, 28 APRIL**

Rallies have taken place across Australia in response to a wave of recent violence against women.

Demonstrators want gender-based violence to be declared a national emergency and stricter laws put in place to stop it. Prime Minister Anthony Albanese said the issue was a national crisis.

In Australia, a woman has been killed on average every four days so far this year. Organiser Martina Ferrara said: "We want alternative reporting options for victim survivors to let them own their stories and own their healing and reporting journey.

"And we want the government to acknowledge this is an emergency action and take immediate action." Speaking at a march in the capital Canberra attended by thousands of protesters, Mr Albanese admitted the government at all levels needed to do better.

"We need to change culture, the attitudes, the legal system and the approach by all governments," he said. "We need to make sure that this isn't up to women, it's up to men to change men's behaviour as well," he added.

Responding to calls by protestors for violence against women to be classified as a national emergency, Albanese said the classification was normally used during floods or bushfires to release a temporary injection of cash. "We don't need one month or two months - we need to address this in a serious way, week by week, month by month, year by year," he said.

His comments were met with mixture of heckles and cheers, But Australia's federal attorney general, Mark Dreyfus, has rejected holding a royal commission into gender-based violence. Albanese has repeatedly called gender-based violence an epidemic but it's not new: in 2021, marches took place across the country over allegations of sexual misconduct within the government.

Recent killings have put the issue back in the spotlight. Earlier this month, a man stabbed six people to death in a Sydney shopping centre. Five of the victims were women and the police are looking at whether they were the target.

In all, 27 women have been killed in the first 119 days of 2024, according to data compiled by the campaign group Destroy the Joint.

*—BBC News*

# Massive Russian drone strikes damage energy infras, hotels

**KYIV, 28 APRIL**

Russian drones early Sunday struck the Black Sea city of Mykolaiv, setting a hotel ablaze and damaging energy infrastructure, the local Ukrainian governor reported, while ammunition shortages continued to hobble Kyiv's troops in the more than 2-year-old war.

Vitaliy Kim, the governor of Ukraine's southern Mykolaiv province, said that Russian drones "seriously damaged" a hotel in its namesake capital, sparking a fire that was later extinguished. Kim also reported that the strike damaged heat-generating infrastructure in the city, but gave no details. He added that there were no casualties.

Russian state agency RIA carried claims that the strike on Mykolaiv targeted a shipyard where naval drones are assembled, as well as a hotel housing "English-speaking mercenaries" who have fought for Kyiv. The RIA report cited Sergei Lebedev, described as a coordinator of local pro-Moscow guerrillas. His claim could not be independently verified.

Also on Sunday morning, the Russian Defence Ministry said that 17 Ukrainian drones were downed overnight over four regions in the country's southwest. Three drones were intercepted near an oil depot in Lyudinovo, an industrial town some 230 km (143 miles) north of the Ukrainian border, Gov Vladislav Shapsha said. There were no immediate reports of any casualties or damage.

Russian shelling on Saturday and overnight wounded at least seven civilians across Ukraine, according to Ukrainian officials. The Donetsk and Kharkiv regions have seen fierce clashes in recent weeks as Russian forces seek to grind out gains along the more than 1,000-km (620-mile) front line, while ammunition shortages have increasingly hamstrung Ukraine's defences.

Russian troops "will likely make significant gains in the coming weeks" while Kyiv awaits much-needed arms from a huge US aid package to reach the front, a Washington-based think tank said. *—AP*

Russia said that it targeted a shipyard *PHOTO: X/@MENCHOSINT*

## Germany grapples with wave of spying threats

**BERLIN, 28 APRIL**

Six suspected spies have been arrested in Germany this month alone, in what has become a torrent of allegations of Russian and Chinese espionage.

For the far-right Alternative for Germany (AfD) party it has proved especially embarrassing, because their top two candidates for the European elections in June have been caught in the crosshairs. An aide to MEP Maximilian Krah, who heads the party's list, has been arrested on suspicion of spying for China. Jian G is accused of being an "employee of a Chinese secret service".

Prosecutors have also begun preliminary investigations into the politician himself over alleged payments from pro-Russian and Chinese sources. But the allegations go well beyond the AfD. Two German nationals of Russian origin have been arrested on suspicion of plotting to sabotage Germany's military aid to Ukraine while three Germans have been detained for allegedly planning to pass on advanced engine designs to Chinese intelligence.

*—BBC News*

# Tornado that hit China has left wide devastation

**BEIJING, 28 APRIL**

Aerial photos posted by Chinese state media on Sunday showed the wide devastation of a part of the southern city of Guangzhou after a tornado swept through the day before, killing five people, injuring dozens others and damaging over a hundred buildings.

As businesses and residents began cleaning debris, the images showed block upon block of devastation in the hardest hit areas with a few clusters of buildings standing amid the destruction, a truck overturned on its side and cars crushed by rubble. Some buildings had their sheet metal roofs torn off.

The tornado, which knocked out power in the area, also injured 33 people on Saturday, officials said. Guangzhou is the capital of Guangdong province and a manufacturing hub near Hong Kong.

The tornado which struck during an afternoon thunderstorm that also brought hail damaged 141 factory buildings, according to authorities.

They said no homes were destroyed, though a news website under the Southern Media Group reported that some had broken windows. The tornado hit several villages in Guangzhou's Baiyun district. In one, packing material known as "pearl cotton" hung from buildings and trees, a report on the Southern Media website said.

It blew into the compound of a nearby furniture company, where workers took shelter in a private home after the metal roof was ripped off their building, the news website reported.

Workers were rolling up the material to be carted away for disposal on Sunday. The disaster hit one week after heavy rains and flooding killed at least four people in Guangdong province.

US Treasury Secretary Janet Yellen visited Guangzhou during an official visit to China earlier in the month. The city, formerly known as Canton, also recently held the Canton Fair, a major export and import exhibition that draws buyers from around the world. *—AP*

At least five people killed and at leat 33 people injured so far *PHOTO: X/@IN_SITE_UPDATES*

# Biden pokes fun at Trump ahead of US Prez elections

**WASHINGTON, 28 APRIL**

US President Joe Biden roasted his predecessor and political rival, Donald Trump and poked fun at his age at the annual dinner for Washington's political and media elites, saying "I am a grown man running against a six-year-old". The White House Correspondents' Association (WHCA) dinner on Saturday night provided the platform for Biden, 81, to continue his criticism of Trump, 77, with cutting humour. The high-profile event came against the backdrop of growing protests over Biden's handling of the Israel-Hamas war.

"Of course, the 2024 election's in full swing and, yes, age is an issue: I'm a grown man running against a 6-year-old," Biden said in a roughly 10-minute speech, referring to former President Trump, whom he called "Sleepy Don."

Speaking to an audience of nearly 3,000 journalists, celebrities and politicians, Biden added, "Age is the only thing we have in common. My vice president actually endorses me." "Donald has had a few tough days lately. You might call it 'stormy' weather," Biden said, an oblique reference to Stormy Daniels, a porn actress who claims she had an affair and received a hush-money payment in the days before the 2016 election, a deal at the centre of his New York trial.

The President went on to draw a contrast between his reelection campaign, which has ramped up since his State of the Union address last month, and that of Trump. Biden and Trump have both secured the delegates they need to win their respective party nominations in the November 5 presidential race, setting a rematch of their 2020 election showdown. After a slew of jokes targeting Trump, Biden then took a more sombre tone to talk about his 2024 rival to the room of journalists, lawmakers and celebrities. *—PTI*

# UK PM Sunak declines to rule out polls in July

**LONDON, 28 APRIL**

British Prime Minister Rishi Sunak on Sunday refused to categorically rule out a July general election amid a damaging defection by one of his Conservative Party MPs to the Opposition Labour Party, just days before local and mayoral elections in the country on 2 May.

Dan Poulter, a doctor and Central Suffolk and North Ipswich member of Parliament said he will switch his allegiance to the Opposition benches before standing down as a parliamentarian at the next election because he can no longer defend the Tory government's track record on the National Health Service (NHS).

Against the backdrop of this latest embarrassment, Sunak was asked during a 'Sky News' interview that his repeated assertion of a general election in the "second half of this year" could also mean July.

"When it comes to a general election, I've been very clear about that multiple times, and again, I'm not going to say anything more than I've already said, I've been very clear about that," said Sunak.

"You're going to try and draw whatever conclusion you want from what I say. I'm going to always try and say the same thing. You should just listen to what I said, [the] same thing I've said all year," he replied.

On the state-funded NHS, Sunak pointed to a drop in the waiting times for patients seeking treatment and pointed to some of his other successes as Prime Minister, such as bringing down inflation, hiking the defence budget and getting the Safety of Rwanda Bill passed through Parliament to start deporting illegal migrants to the east African country from later this year. *—PTI*

UNANNOUNCED VISIT

# *China: Musk to discuss full self driving car*

**BEIJING, 28 APRIL**

Elon Musk is visiting Beijing to discuss enabling autonomous driving mode on Tesla cars in China, according to media reports.

Musk wants to enable Full Self Driving (FSD) in China and transfer data collected in the country abroad to train its algorithms. FSD is available in countries including the US but not in China. The news came after a US report tied Tesla's autonomous driving modes to at least 13 crashes, involving one death.

China is Tesla's second-biggest market. Other carmakers such as Xpeng - headquartered in Guangzhou - have been attempting to compete with Tesla by rolling out similar self-driving functions in their cars. The electric carmaker has taken previously taken steps to reassure Chinese authorities about the rollout of FSD in the country, including establishing a data centre in Shanghai to process data about Chinese consumers in accordance with local laws.

The trip comes days after the US's National Highway Traffic Safety Administration (NHTSA) said it was investigating whether a recall successfully addressed safety concerns relating to Tesla's driver assistance system.

The NHTSA said that despite requirements that drivers maintain focus on the road and be prepared to take control at a moment's notice when autonomous driving was enabled, drivers involved in the crashes "were not sufficiently engaged". The regulator's analysis was conducted before a recall Tesla said would fix the issue.

Tesla's software is supposed to make sure that drivers are paying attention and that the feature is only in use in appropriate conditions, such as driving on highways. Musk has promised that Teslas will be able to act as autonomous "robotaxis" for years. In 2015, he said Teslas would achieve "full autonomy" by 2018. And in 2019, he said the company would have robotaxis operating by the following year.

*—BBC News*

Tesla Owner Elon Musk in Beijing for a meeting *PHOTO: X/@BeijingDai*

PHOTO: PTI

## Vedanta placed best to ride rising commodity prices

**NEW DELHI, 28 APRIL**

Mining conglomerate Vedanta Ltd is likely to see less pressure on cash flows after liability management at the holding company level and is now best placed to ride rising commodity prices, analysts said. Improved performance in aluminium, power and zinc enabled the company to turn in EBITDA of Rs 87,600 crore in the January-March quarter, up by 4 per cent quarter-on-quarter. The improved performance was attributable to lower cost of production in aluminium and zinc and higher sales volume, partially offset by softer zinc prices. Despite marginal delays, Vedanta is set to complete its alumina/ aluminium/ international zinc expansion during the current fiscal year (FY25), which will provide visibility around volume growth and cost reduction FY26 onwards. *—PTI*

## Govt to hold 2-day summit on critical minerals

**NEW DELHI, 28 APRIL**

The government will hold a two-day summit on critical minerals beginning Monday to foster collaboration, share knowledge and drive innovation in the field of critical mineral beneficiation and processing. The Ministry of Mines, in collaboration with the Shakti Sustainable Energy Foundation (Shakti), Council on Energy, Environment and Water (CEEW), and Indian Institute of Sustainable Development (IISD), will hold "Critical Minerals Summit: Enhancing Beneficiation and Processing Capabilities" from 29 to 30th April, 2024. The summit will bring together a diverse array of Indian and international stakeholders, including industry leaders, startups, government officials, scientists, academics, and policy experts. *—PTI*

## Strong start to office real estate in India in 2024

**NEW DELHI, 28 APRIL**

Office real estate in India did well in the first quarter of 2024, increasing to 13.40 million sq ft from 11.85 million sq ft same quarter of last year, as per the latest office market report from Vestian, a US-headquartered workplace solutions firm. During the January-March 2024 quarter, the office market showcased a 13 per cent increase in absorption. However, the absorption declined by 31 per cent on a quarterly basis. The southern cities of Bengaluru, Chennai, and Hyderabad accounted for 61 per cent of the pan-India absorption in the first quarter of 2024, increasing its share from 54 per cent a year earlier, the Vestian report said. Moreover, IT-ITeS sector dominated absorption with 47 per cent share, followed by the BFSI sector with 11 per cent share. *—ANI*

## The ePlane to develop electric air taxi by March 2025

**NEW DELHI, 28 APRIL**

Chennai-based startup The ePlane Company expects to develop a certifiable prototype of a flying electric taxi by March next year as it works on ways to alleviate urban congestion. Incubated out of the Indian Institute of Technology (IIT), Madras, the company also aims to commercialise its drones that can carry a payload of 2-6 kilograms in the coming months, according to a senior executive. The ePlane Company's Founder and CEO Satya Chakravarthy said it is developing an eVTOL (electric Vertical Takeoff and Landing) aircraft and to begin with, it will be a three or four-seater plane which can be converted into air ambulance. *—PTI*

# China's share in India's imports jump to 30 pc: GTRI

### 'The growing trade deficit with China is a cause of concern'

**NEW DELHI, 28 APRIL**

With increasing India's dependence on Chinese industrial goods like telecom, machinery and electronics, Beijing's share in New Delhi's imports of such goods rose to 30 per cent from 21 per cent in the last 15 years, a report said.

According to the report by the economic think tank Global Trade Research Initiative (GTRI), the growing trade deficit with China is a cause of concern, and the strategic implications of this dependency are profound, affecting not only economic but also national security dimensions.

From 2019 to 2024, India's exports to China have stagnated at around USD 16 billion annually, while imports from China have surged from USD 70.3 billion in 2018-19 to over USD 101 billion in 2023-24, resulting in a cumulative trade deficit exceeding USD 387 billion over five years.

The Indian government and industries must evaluate and potentially recalibrate their import strategies, fostering more diversified and resilient supply chains, GTRI founder Ajay Srivastava said.

This is imperative not only to mitigate economic risks but also to bolster domestic industries and reduce dependency on single-country imports, especially from a geopolitical competitor like China, he added.

In 2023-24, India's total merchandise imports amounted to USD 677.2 billion, with USD 101.8 billion of that coming from China.

This means China accounted for 15 per cent of total imports.

Chinese companies are involved in India's energy, telecommunications, and transportation sectors, and they play critical roles in smartphones, electronics, electric and passenger vehicles, solar energy, engineering projects and many other sectors, it said.

The large-scale entry of Chinese automakers into India will impact the domestic auto/EV manufacturers, firms working in the EV value chain space and battery development, it added. *—PTI*

India's exports to China have stagnated at around USD 16 billion annually **PHOTO: PTI**

AMID TAX TREATY

# FPIs dump Indian equities worth ₹6,300cr

**NEW DELHI, 28 APRIL**

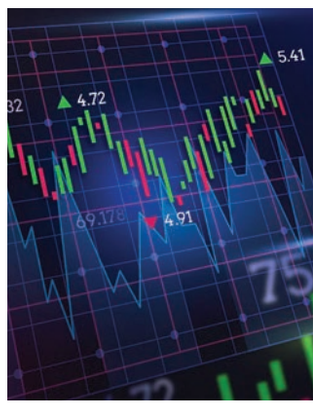



PHOTO: FREEPIK

Foreign investors pulled out domestic equities worth Rs 6,300 crore in April on concerns over tweaks in India's tax treaty with Mauritius and sustained rise in US bond yields.

This came following a whopping net investment of Rs 35,098 crore in March and Rs 1,539 crore in February, data with the depositories showed.

Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) made a net outflow of Rs 6,304 crore in Indian equities this month (till 26 April), the data showed.

While the tweak in India's tax treaty with Mauritius on investments made in India via the island nation continues to bother foreign investors, weak cues from the global markets with uncertain macro and interest rate outlook didn't augur well for emerging market equities, Himanshu Srivastava, Associate Director - Manager Research, Morningstar Investment Research India, said.

Additionally, surge in commodity prices, especially oil and higher US retail inflation dashed hopes of an early rate cut by the US Fed thereby triggering a surge in the US 10-year yield. This would have possibly prompted foreign investors to adopt a wait and watch approach, he added.

Apart from equities, FPIs withdrew Rs 10,640 crore from the debt market during the period under review.

Before this, foreign investors invested Rs 13,602 crore in March, Rs 22,419 crore in February, Rs 19,836 crore in January. This inflow was driven by the upcoming inclusion of Indian government bonds in the JP Morgan Index.

- Foreign Portfolio Investors (FPIs) made a net outflow of Rs 6,304 crore in Indian equities this month (till 26 April), the data showed

JP Morgan Chase & Co. in September last year announced that it will add Indian government bonds to its benchmark emerging market index from June 2024.

This landmark inclusion is anticipated to benefit India by attracting around USD 20-40 billion in the subsequent 18 to 24 months.

Overall, the total inflow for this year so far stood at Rs 4,590 crore in equities and Rs 45,218 crore in the debt market. *—PTI*

# Market valuation of 6 most valued firms rises by ₹1.30L cr

**NEW DELHI, 28 APRIL**

The combined market valuation of six of the top-10 most valued firms increased Rs 1,30,734.57 crore last week, with State Bank of India and ICICI Bank emerging as the biggest gainers in line with an overall positive trend in equities.

Last week, the BSE benchmark advanced 641.83 points or 0.87 per cent.

The valuation of the State Bank of India rallied Rs 45,158.54 crore to Rs 7,15,218.40 crore.

ICICI Bank's market valuation rose Rs 28,726.33 crore to Rs 7,77,750.22 crore.

Bharti Airtel added Rs 20,747.99 crore to Rs 7,51,406.35 crore, and that of ITC jumped Rs 18,914.35 crore to Rs 5,49,265.32 crore.

The market capitalisation (mcap) of Life Insurance Corporation of India (LIC) advanced by Rs 9,487.5 crore to Rs 6,24,941.40 crore, and that of Infosys went up by Rs 7,699.86 crore to Rs 5,93,636.31 crore.

However, the mcap of Reliance Industries declined by Rs 26,115.56 crore to Rs 19,64,079.96 crore.

The valuation of HDFC Bank dipped by Rs 16,371.34 crore to Rs 11,46,943.59 crore.

The mcap of Tata Consultancy Services went lower by Rs 5,282.41 crore to Rs 13,79,522.50 crore, and that of Hindustan Unilever Limited diminished by Rs 2,525.81 crore to Rs 5,21,961.70 crore.

Reliance Industries remained the most valued firm from the top-10 pack, followed by Tata Consultancy Services, HDFC Bank, ICICI Bank, Bharti Airtel, State Bank of India, LIC, Infosys, ITC and Hindustan Unilever. *—PTI*

SBI share price went up to Rs 194.20 — its intraday high immediately after the announcement of the SBI Q1FY2020 results **PHOTO: PTI**

292 projects had reported cost overrun of Rs 2,89,699.46 crore **PHOTO: PIXABAY**

# Govt says 448 infra projects hit by cost overrun of ₹5.55 lakh cr in Oct-Dec

**NEW DELHI, 28 APRIL**

As many as 448 infrastructure projects, each entailing an investment of Rs 150 crore or above, were hit by cost overrun of more than Rs 5.55 lakh crore during December quarter 2023, an official report stated.

The Quarterly Project Implementation Status Report (QPISR) on Central Sector Projects (costing Rs 150 crore and above) for the third quarter of 2023-24, contains detailed information on 1,897 projects.

The QPISR is prepared by Ministry of Statistics and Programme Implementation.

Out of 1,897 projects, 448 projects were having cost overrun of Rs 5,55,352.41 crore, which is 65.2 per cent of their sanctioned cost.

However, it stated that with regard to the latest approved cost, 292 projects had reported cost overrun of Rs 2,89,699.46 crore.

Further, 276 projects are having both time and cost overruns.

Out of 1,897 projects, 56 projects were ahead of schedule, 632 projects were on schedule, 902 projects were delayed with respect to the original schedule of completion.

The anticipated completion cost of these 1,897 projects is reported to be Rs 31,74,489.91 crore.

The percentage of delayed projects changed from 56.70 per cent in quarter ended December 2022 to 47.55 per cent in third quarter of FY24. The percentage of cost overrun reduced from 21.42 per cent to 20.1 per cent. *—PTI*

## 'Economy remains in bright spot'

**New Delhi, 28 April**

In contrast to the global scenario, the Indian economy continues to exhibit strong economic performance with broad-based growth across sectors, the Ministry of Finance asserted. Many international organisations assert India's pivotal role in determining the growth path of Asia in the coming years, the review report said. . The strong growth momentum in the economy and projected real GDP growth for 2024-25 at 7 per cent, driven by a pick-up in rural demand and sustained momentum in the manufacturing sector. The International Monetary Fund in its latest report forecasted India's growth at a high of 6.8 per cent in 2024-25 and 6.5 per cent in 2025- 26, based on its assessment of continuing strength in domestic demand and a rising working-age population. On inflation, it said the government's efforts in managing retail inflation in 2023-24 have been highly successful. Inflation measured by the Consumer Price Index declined from 6.7 per cent in 2022-23 to 5.4 per cent in 2023-24, which is within the upper tolerance level of the inflation-targeting framework. *—ANI*

# FIU notifies new reports on money laundering for markets

FIU has shared new guidelines for STR reporting **PHOTO: PTI**

**NEW DELHI, 28 APRIL**

A fresh set of 'alert indicators' have been issued by India's financial intelligence unit (FIU) for capital markets, insurance companies, online payment gateway intermediaries and crypto currency service providers for effective checking of suspicious transactions in their channels as part of the anti-money laundering and counter-terrorism financing regime.

These new guidelines have been issued under the provisions of the Prevention of Money Laundering Act (PMLA) during the 2022-23 financial year and published in a recently released report that has been accessed by PTI.

This is part of the anti-money laundering (AML) and combating the financing of terrorism (CFT) regime followed by the country as part of which financial institutions and intermediaries are mandated to share suspicious transaction reports (STRs) with the FIU which subsequently analyses them and shares them for action with various investigative and intelligence agencies.

FIU proactively engages with the financial sector regulators and reporting entities to understand emerging risks and to undertake immediate mitigating measures, the charter for the federal financial data mining agency says.

These 'alert indicators' will address "emerging risks" in the market infrastructure institutions (MIIs)-- stock exchanges and depositories--like synchronised and manipulative trade practices, order spoofing, mis-utilisation of client funds by the stock brokers, suspicious off-market transactions etc.

The FIU has also shared the new alert indicator guidelines for STR reporting with real estate agents categorised as designated non-financial businesses and professions (DNFBP) under PMLA. *—PTI*

# Banks may have to slowdown loan growth in FY25: S&P

**NEW DELHI, 28 APRIL**

Indian banks' credit growth, profitability and asset quality would remain robust in current fiscal reflecting strong economic growth, but they may be compelled to slow down their loan growth as deposits are not growing at a similar pace, S&P Global Ratings has said.

S&P Global Ratings Director SSEA Nikita Anand said the agency expects the sector's strong credit growth to moderate to 14 per cent in FY25, from 16 per cent in FY24, if deposit growth, especially retail deposits, remain tepid.

Anand said there is a deterioration in loan-to-deposit ratio is every bank, with loan growth being 2-3 percentage points higher than deposit growth.

Generally, loan growth has been led by private sector banks which see around 17-18 per cent growth, public sector banks on the other hand see loan growth in the range of 12-14 per cent. *—PTI*

**PHOTO: WORLDIPREVIEW**

GROWTH RECOVERY

# 'Unemployment among youth is transient'

**NEW DELHI, 28 APRIL**

Unemployment is highest for younger age brackets, but it is 'transient' as Indian youths spend more time acquiring skills and trying hands at entrepreneurship, RBI Monetary Policy Committee (MPC) member Ashima Goyal has said.

There is steady improvement in job creation in the country with the strong growth recovery, Goyal added.

Goyal pointed out that the ILO report also shows that youth unemployment has been falling in the recent period, it was 17.5 per cent in 2019 and 10 per cent in 2023.

She said that in 2022, unemployment was highest for the age group 20-24 at 16.9 per cent but was at the aggregate average for the 30-34 age group.

Noting that this period (2022) includes the pandemic-related disruptions, Goyal said there is steady improvement with the strong growth recovery.

Asked why is foreign direct investment slowing down, Goyal said the re-shoring efforts in advanced economies by which they are inducing capital to come back to home countries to enhance economic security is one reason.

Last year, gross FDI inflows slowed marginally to USD 59.9 billion in April-January 2023-24 from USD 61.7 over the same period a year ago, while net FDI inflows fell more sharply to USD 14.2 billion from USD 25 billion.

According to Goyal, the reason was that reparations rose as FDI sent back the large profit it earned to its home country.

FDI inflows to China have fallen dramatically from a share of 12.5 per cent in the first nine months of 2022 to only 1.7 per cent in the same period of 2023.

Various countries like the US, Canada, Mexico, Brazil, Poland and Germany have witnessed significant gains in the global market share, following the decline of FDI flows to China. *—PTI*

Ashima Goyal **PHOTO: PTI**

> **The re-shoring efforts in advanced economies by which they are inducing capital to come back to home countries to enhance economic security is one reason.**
>
> -Ashima Goyal, RBI MPC member

# Jack's ton and Kohli's knock propelled RCB to win

## The Englishman plundered as many as 10 sixes in his breathtaking effort

**AHMEDABAD, 28 APRIL**

Will Jacks slammed a sensational hundred while Virat Kohli upped his game in the middle overs as Royal Challengers Bengaluru outplayed Gujarat Titans by nine wickets in the IPL here on Sunday.

Kohli (70 not out of 44), whose approach in the middle overs was questioned in the previous game, employed the sweep shot against the spinners to make a statement before Jacks (100 not out off 41) cut loose to gun down the 201-run target with as many 24 balls to spare. Jacks went berserk in what turned out to be the final over of the game, hammering as many as four sixes and four off Rashid Khan to close out the game much sooner than expected.

The Englishman plundered as many as 10 sixes in his breathtaking effort.Put into bat, Shahrukh Khan (58 off 30) made full use of his promotion in the batting order while Sai Sudharsan (84 not out off 49) stayed till the end to guide Gujarat Titans to 200 for three.

Jacks, Kohli power RCB to easy win over GT *PHOTO: PTI*

Titans introduced spin very early, and Kohli was up to the task, collecting back-to-back sixes off left-arm spinner Ravi Sai Kishore to clarify his intent. He was particularly harsh towards another Afghan spinner Noor Ahmed, sweeping him at will before bringing up his fifty off 32 balls.Thereafter, Kohli did not need to do much as Jacks put the Titans bowlers to the sword. With Sudharan at the other end, Titans decided to do something different and sent Shahrukh ahead of the likes of Azmatullah

**Brief Scores:**
Gujarat Titans: 200 for 3 in 20 overs (Sai Sudharsan 84 not out, M Shahrukh Khan 58; Swapnil Singh 1/23).

Royal Challengers Bengaluru: 206 for 1 in 16 overs (Virat Kohli 70 not out, Will Jacks 100 not out). *—PTI*

**TODAY'S MATCH**

KOLKATA KNIGHT RIDERS vs DELHI CAPITALS

Time: 7:30 PM

Where To Watch:
**Jio Cinema, Star Sports Network**

**Stadium**: Eden Gardens Stadium in Kolkata

**ARCHERY WORLD CUP**

Indian men's recurve team of Dhiraj Bommadevara, Tarundeep Rai, and Pravin Jadhav shocked reigning Olympic champions South Korea in a historic win to land an Archery World Cup gold medal after 14 years, in Shanghai on Sunday. *PHOTO: PTI*

# India men's team shocks Olympic champions Korea

**SHANGHAI, 28 APRIL**

Indian men's recurve team of Dhiraj Bommadevara, Tarundeep Rai, and Pravin Jadhav shocked reigning Olympic champions South Korea in a historic win to land an Archery World Cup gold medal after 14 years, here on Sunday.

This triumph over the archery powerhouse in well over a decade also comes as a boost to their chances of securing a berth in the upcoming Paris Olympics.

The trio of Dhiraj, Tarundeep, and Pravin showed ice-cool composure to get the better of mighty Koreans without dropping a set.

The 40-year-old Army man Tarundeep was also a part of the gold medal-winning team in Shanghai World Cup Stage 4 in August 2010. Then the recurve team comprising Rahul Banerjee, Tarundeep, and Jayanta defeated Japan.

In a battle between the top two seeds of the competition, India won 5-1 (57-57, 57-55, 55-53), taking their gold medal count to five in the season-opening Stage 1 World Cup.

The success also rubbed on the recurve mixed team of Ankita Bhakat and Dhiraj who trounced Alejandra Valencia and Matias Grande of Mexico 6-0 (35-31, 38-35, 39-37) to win bronze.

On a comeback trail after missing the whole 2023 after becoming a mother in December 2022, Deepika Kumari faltered in the final hurdle to settle for a silver in the women's recurve individual section.

The former world No. 1, who started from the bottom after qualifying as the 30th seed, eliminated two Koreans in the quarterfinal and semifinal.

But in the final, Deepika lost to Hangzhou Asian Games champion Lim Sihyeon in straight sets 6-0 (26-27, 27-29, 27-28).

Deepika had a poor start in the title round, with her second arrow landing in the seven-point red ring.

Rising 20-year-old Lim dropped just one point to take the second set and sealed the gold without much fuss. *—PTI*

India's Deepika Kumari competes in the women's recurve individual event at the Archery Cup Stage 1, in Shanghai, China on Sunday *PHOTO: PTI*

*PHOTO: AFP*

## Pakistan appoints Kirsten as ODI, T20I head coach

**LAHORE, 28 APRIL**

The Pakistan Cricket Board (PCB) on Sunday appointed World Cup-winning Gary Kirsten as their head coach for ODIs and T20Is, while former Australian pacer Jason Gillespie will take over that role in Test cricket. Along with them, former Pakistan all-rounder Azhar Mahmood was appointed as the assistant coach of the team across the formats. "The appointment of (Gary) Kirsten and (Jason) Gillispie who are high-profile coaches shows how much value is given to the Pakistan cricket team and how much potential foreign coaches see in our players," PCB chief Mohsin Naqvi said during a media conference. "We want to give the team the best facilities and that is why we have gone for Kirsten and Gillispie," he added. *—PTI*

## PAK beat NZ by 9 runs; level series 2-2

**KARACHI, 28 APRIL**

To end the series at 2-2, Pakistan will take on New Zealand in the fifth and final T20I of the series on Saturday. New Zealand has already gained an unassailable lead of 2-1, so either they are going to win this series or it ends in a tie. Led by Babar Azam, Pakistan won the second game by 7 wickets after the opening contest was washed out due to rain. What followed was a superb comeback from the Kiwis as they registered two wins on the trot. The first one was a 7-wicket win while the second one was a 4-run victory. *—PTI*

## Senthilkumar enters Batch Open squash final

**NEW DELHI, 28 APRIL**

National champion Velavan Senthilkumar brushed aside Hong Kong's Andes Ling to enter the final of the Batch Open squash tournament in Paris. Senthilkumar, who is ranked 58 in the world, won his semifinal match 11-2, 11-1, 11-6 in 22 minutes on Saturday night.The Indian will face Frenchman Melvil Scianimanico for the title. Senthilkumar had earlier defeated Jakub Solnicky of the Czech Republic. *—PTI*

# KKR wary of resurgent DC

**KOLKATA, 28 APRIL**

A resurgent Delhi Capitals will look to exploit Kolkata Knight Riders' bowling vulnerabilities and ascend to the top four in the table during their Indian Premier League match here on Monday.

With four wins in their last five matches, the Rishabh Pant-led side is gradually assembling their pieces and starting to look like a force to be reckoned with.

On the other hand, the Gautam Gambhir-mentored side has endured three defeats in their last five matches with their profligacy in bowling hurting them badly.

*PHOTO: PTI*

Signed up as Lungi Ngidi's replacement, Aussie Jake Fraser-McGurk has proved to be their X-factor with his ferocious batting display at the top. A natural power-hitter with superb hand-eye coordination, the 22-year-old has taken the IPL by storm scoring 247 runs in five matches at a strike-rate of 237.50.

His brutal treatment of the otherwise sensational Jasprit Bumrah stands as a testimony of his skill level. McGurk slammed a slower ball from the Mumbai Indians pacer for a six and it was the first time a batter lofted Bumrah for a first-ball six. The pacer conceded 18 runs in his first over, the most by him in this season in a single over as DC overcame MI by 10 runs on Saturday. He made a 27-ball 84 against MI, and McGurk will relish the batting-friendly conditions at Eden Gardens where 523 runs, including a record 42 sixes. *—PTI*

Dame Valerie Adams and Indian athlete Anju Bobby George with Lilian Kasait from Kenya winner, Emmaculate Achol from Kenya 2nd and Lemlem Hailu from Ethiopia 3rd of Elite Women during the TCS World 10K Bengaluru, in Bengaluru on Sunday *PHOTO: PTI*

**ASBC ASIAN U-22**

# Jadumani, Akash enter q/fs

**ASTANA, 28 APRIL**

Mandengbam Jadumani Singh (51kg) and Akash Gorkha (60kg) entered the quarterfinals of the ASBC Asian U22 & Youth Boxing Championships here on Sunday.

Jadumani Singh outperformed Aldarkhishig Battulga of Mongolia by winning the bout with an RSC (Referee Stop Contest) decision in round two in the U-22 category.Akash, on the other hand, faced a tough challenge against Mongolia's Ganbaatar Gan Erdene but made a remarkable comeback after losing the first round to win the bout 4-1.

Both the boxers will play their quarter-final bout on Tuesday.

Ajay Kumar (63.5kg) and Ankush (71kg) will begin their campaign in the U-22 category later on Sunday.

Mandengbam Jadumani Singh and Akash Gorkha *PHOTO: PTI*

On Saturday, Jatin (57kg), Sagar Jakhar (60kg), and Yashwardhan Singh (63.5kg) also entered the next round. Jatin and Yashwardhan won their bouts with an identical 5-0 win, while Sagar received a walkover from his opponent Leong Brandon of Singapore.

On Monday, 11 boxers will be in action in their respective youth categories with Laxmi (50kg), Tamanna (54kg), Yatri Patel (57kg), and Shrusthi Sathe (63kg) competing in the women's category. *—PTI*

## Arsenal survive Spurs fightback

**LONDON, 28 APRIL**

Arsenal extended their lead at the top of the Premier League table to four points after beating Tottenham 3-2 on Sunday – despite being pinned back from 3-0 up – thanks to goals from Pierre-Emile Hojbjerg (og), Bukayo Saka and Kai Havertz.Mikel Arteta named an unchanged side from the team that cruised past Chelsea on Tuesday, with Thomas Partey making consecutive league starts for the first time since August. It was a high-intensity start from both teams with Arsenal dominating possession but Spurs were stronger and quicker in the early challenges, matching the tenacity from the stands. Arsenal were being caught on the ball though and mistakes – first from Partey and later from Takehiro Tomiyasu – offered Spurs some encouragement in their press. However, on the 15-minute mark, Arsenal clicked into gear and looked to have opened the scoring when Martin Odegaard was found in behind by Partey before teeing up Havertz, although the Norwegian was just offside in the build-up. *—PTI*

Arsenal survives Tottenham Hotspur's fightback in chaotic North London derby *PHOTO: AFP*

**CHELSEA DENIED VILLA WIN**

# *Pochettino says VAR 'damaging' English football*

**LONDON, 28 APRIL**

Mauricio Pochettino claimed VAR is "damaging" English football after Chelsea saw a potential winning goal chalked off at the end of their 2-2 Premier League draw with Aston Villa.

In stark contrast to their capitulation at Arsenal on Tuesday, the Blues produced an impressive fightback at Villa Park, with Noni Madueke's goal and a brilliant Conor Gallagher strike bringing them level late on.

Chelsea thought they had completed the turnaround in stoppage time when Disasi powered a header past Robin Olsen, only for VAR Chris Kavanagh to advise Craig Pawson to review the goal.

The officials judged the decision not to penalize Benoit Badiashile's nudge on Diego Carlos to be a clear error - sparking fury among Chelsea's players at full-time, while Mauricio Pochettino labeled Pawson "unbelievable" and the decision "ridiculous".

Mauricio Pochettino claimed VAR is "damaging" English football *PHOTO: AFP*

Villa had earlier raced into the lead thanks to Marc Cucurella's own goal before Morgan Rogers doubled the advantage shortly before half-time.

However, Unai Emery's side were subdued throughout and missed the chance to move nine points clear of Tottenham - who host Arsenal on Sunday, in the race for fourth place.

Chelsea may have endured the lowest point of their season at Arsenal earlier this week but their most recent trip to Villa Park was one of the most impressive outings of Pochettino's reign.

However, the evening started miserably for Chelsea, who conceded after four minutes for the second game in a row when Lucas Digne punished Madueke's feeble defending before Cucurella diverted John McGinn's scuffed shot into his net.

Villa then retreated into their half for much of the game and briefly looked to have been pegged back by Nicolas Jackson's smart finish, only for VAR to show he was offside.

- Mauricio Pochettino claimed VAR is "damaging" English football after Chelsea saw a potential winning goal chalked off at the end of their 2-2 Premier League draw with Aston Villa.

The forward then missed a glorious chance, hitting the post when unmarked from just yards out - and was punished a short while later when Rogers fired past Djordje Petrovic from the edge of the box.

The hosts suffered a blow when Emiliano Martinez failed to return for the second half, joining Youri Tielemans on the sideline after both suffered injuries during the opening period. *—AP*